





## Israel on security alert for Passover

**OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP)** — Israel prepared to begin the Jewish Passover holiday Friday with its security forces on special alert for possible Islamist attacks to avenge the death of Hamas bomb-maker Mohieddin Sharif.

Hundreds of extra soldiers and police were deployed in Israeli cities, Jewish settlements and popular tourist spots, notably those in the West Bank, officials said.

The alert is expected to heighten further as of Sunday when the five-day 'Eid Al Adha' ends and the likelihood of an Islamist attack is believed to increase.

Extra soldiers will be sent Sunday to the divided West Bank city of Hebron where the zealous community of Jewish settlers organise an annual Passover street celebration.

The higher level of alert is justified by the threats of attacks by Palestinian Islamic militants and will be maintained until the start of May

after the celebrations marking Israel's 50th anniversary, said police minister Avigdor Kahalani.

Concern over possible bombings or other attacks was particularly high following threats by the Islamist group Hamas to avenge the death of Sharif, whose body was found March 29 at the scene of a car-bomb explosion in the Palestinian-ruled West Bank city of Ramallah.

The Palestinian National Authority (PNA) cleared Israel of responsibility in Sharif's killing, saying their investigation showed the Islamist was slain by fellow Hamas members in an internal power struggle.

Hamas has rejected this version and accused Palestinian police of collaborating with Israel to kill Sharif, considered a key figure behind a spate of suicide bombings which killed dozens of Israelis over the past four years.

Israeli security officials fear that an escalating feud between Hamas and the PNA

over the affair could lead to Hamas attacks, not on Palestinian President Yasser Arafat's administration but on Israel.

In a series of statements issued this week, the armed branch of Hamas vowed massive revenge attacks against Israel and Jewish interests worldwide.

The Israeli government has warned it would hold the PNA responsible for any terror attacks, asserting that Mr. Arafat has failed to honour his commitment under peace agreements to uproot the armed opposition group.

Passover, which begins at sundown Friday and lasts eight days, celebrates Jews' escape from slavery in Egypt in biblical times, which was considered the defining moment in the creation of the Jewish people.

The holiday begins with the festive Seder supper Friday night, a tradition observed by even non-practising Jewish families.

Despite the security alert

inside Israel and around Jewish settlements in occupied areas, the Israeli army has not followed its practice of recent years of sealing off the Palestinian territories for the holiday.

Military sources said senior generals opposed imposing a travel ban on West Bank and Gaza Palestinians, which would prevent tens of thousands of labourers from their day jobs in Israel.

"We decided as a policy that we would allow the continued movement of people as in the past few months" when the travel restrictions have been gradually relaxed, said General Yaacov Orr, coordinator of Israeli activities in the occupied territories.

Israel routinely seals the territories, sometimes for months, after big anti-Israeli attacks and during major holidays, creating widespread economic hardships which many say fuel despair and extremism among the Palestinians.



**ACTORS REENACT CRUCIFIXION OF JESUS:** An actor playing a bloody Jesus Christ, wearing a crown of thorns, stumbles with a large cross Friday as he is whipped and paraded by Roman soldiers along the Via Dolorosa during a reenactment of the crucifixion by a group of Christian pilgrims from California. Thousands of pilgrims took part in Good Friday processions through the Old City as in other parts of the holy city Jews prepared for the Passover holiday commemorating the biblical exodus from slavery in Egypt and Muslim faithful gathered to pray at Al Aqsa Mosque for the 'Eid Al Adha' (Reuters photo)

## Peace Now condemns Hebron settler rally for 50th anniversary

**TEL AVIV (AFP)** — Israeli anti-settlers group Peace Now denounced Friday a rally planned by Jewish settlers in the West Bank town of Hebron this weekend to mark the 50th anniversary of the creation of Israel.

Peace Now said in a statement that the planned rally was a "disgrace for Israel," calling for a simultaneous sit-in protest, although the Israeli army had refused to

give permission for such a counter demonstration.

The group criticised the Israeli government for financing the rally, planned for Sunday, saying the Jewish settler community in Hebron included "the craziest of the extremists."

Several government ministers and top rabbis are due to attend the settlers' rally in Hebron to mark Israel's 50th anniversary celebra-

tions and the 30th year of Jewish settlement in the town.

The settlers hold a rally every year to mark Jewish Passover celebrations, marching by the Tomb of the Patriarchs, a site sacred to both Jews and Muslims.

Some 400 Jewish settlers live in enclaves in the fifth of Hebron which remains under the control of the Israeli army.

## Paper says 'mini-summit' at hand to draw up Arab 'action plan'

**RABAT (AP)** — A "mini-Arab summit" likely aimed at coming up with an "action plan" to unblock the Middle East peace process will be held soon in Rabat, a Moroccan newspaper reported Friday, citing official sources.

## One dead, eight wounded in riot after Egyptian police torture claim

**CAIRO (AFP)** — One person was killed and eight wounded, four of them policemen, when residents of a Nile Delta village attacked police they accused of torturing a villager to death. Egypt's interior ministry said Friday.

Police arrested 25 residents of the village of Wabur Al Nur, in the Bilqas region 160 kilometres north of the capital, overnight for "stirring up public disorder," the ministry statement said.

According to the statement,

the disturbances started following the death of Wahid Al Sayed Ahmad, a 25-year-old driver.

"The villagers claimed that a police officer detained him. The citizen, who was away from home for two days, returned home, where he died of a swelling of the spleen," the ministry said.

"During the funeral villagers stoned police, wounding four of them and smashing the windows of a passing train," the statement said.

The police fired tear-gas canisters to disperse the villagers, leading to the death of Al Meadawi Ahmad Al Meadawi, 28, and injuries to four civilians, the ministry statement said.

The opposition daily Al Wafd reported that police had arrested Ahmad to pressure his brother to give himself up to serve an outstanding prison sentence.

It said his body was later found near the village police station "bearing signs of torture."

## Saudi Arabia sends 125 tonnes of Hajj meat to Pakistan, Sudan

**JEDDAH (AP)** — Saudi Arabia has sent 125 tonnes of meat from livestock slaughtered during the Mecca pilgrimage to Pakistan and Sudan, the official Saudi Press Agency reported Friday.

Two Pakistan International Airlines planes flew from Saudi Arabia Thursday and Friday carrying a total of 60 tonnes of meat to be distributed among the Pakistani poor and Afghan refugees in the north-western city of Peshawar, said the agency.

A Saudi Arabian Airlines

plane flew Thursday to Sudan with 65 tonnes of meat.

The slaughter of animals is one of the rituals of the annual Islamic pilgrimage or Hajj, which ended in Mecca Thursday. The sacrifice symbolises God's saving of Abraham's son, who was Ismail according to Muslim tradition, after the patriarch offered to sacrifice him.

More than 260,000 sheep, 3,130 camels and 2,650 calves were slaughtered by Wednesday, said the Islamic Development Bank, which oversees the

sacrifice and distribution of the meat.

The carcasses of about 20,500 sheep and 827 camels and calves were distributed among the pilgrims and the poor of Mecca.

The government decided to give the remaining meat to the needy of Pakistan and Sudan.

Pilgrims who don't wish to have an animal slaughtered on their behalf may fast instead, or buy a coupon from booths of the Islamic Development Bank for about \$100. Both measures are viewed as sacrifices.

## Turkish parliament to debate Ciller graft probe

**ANKARA (R)** — Turkey's parliament will discuss next week a government call for an investigation into former Turkish Prime Minister Tansu Ciller's personal wealth, the Anadolu news agency said on Friday.

The motion, proposed by the government of Turkish Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz, requests an investigation into

acquisitions allegedly made by Ms. Ciller and her businessman husband while she was prime minister between 1993 and 1996.

The couple deny any wrongdoing.

The debate will take place on April 14, once parliament has reconvened after the 'Eid Al Adha' public holiday, the agency said.

Ms. Ciller's party has also called for a probe of Mr. Yilmaz's assets, in an apparent tit-for-tat row between the conservative arch-rivals.

Ms. Ciller became Turkey's first woman prime minister in 1993. Corruption charges against her helped bring down a coalition government she formed with Mr. Yilmaz in 1996.

## Taliban says Iran blocked river, flooded villages

**ISLAMABAD (AP)** — Afghanistan's hard-line Taliban army accused Iran Friday of blocking the Helmand River on its side of the border, causing the river to swell, overflow its banks and flood dozens of villages in southwestern Afghanistan.

"We want the international community to do something... this is inhuman," said the Taliban ambassador to Pakistan, Abdul Mujahid, who said he received details of the flooding from the Taliban headquarters in Kandahar in southeastern Afghanistan.

He said dozens of villages in Nimroz province have been inundated with water, which was trapped on the Afghan side of the border.

It was not immediately possible to get a comment from Iran or to independently confirm the report.

"We are asking the United Nations and the international community to come to the area and see for themselves and to help us," he said in a telephone interview.

Environmentalists in Pakistan said that satellite pho-

tographs would be able to verify the flooding as a result of the Helmand River overflowing its banks. They also said that it is possible for Iran to dam the river on its side of the border, although it would be a violation of international treaties.

The Taliban army, which controls roughly 85 per cent of Afghanistan, sees Iran as an adversary and has repeatedly accused Tehran of supporting its northern-based opposition, particularly its Shiite Muslim partners.

The anti-Taliban alliance largely represents Afghanistan's minorities, including Shiite Muslims. Most Iranians are Shiite Muslims.

"We want the world to stop this inhuman act against the people of Afghanistan," he said.

In recent weeks southern Afghanistan has been devastated by flash flooding much of it in southwestern parts of the country. International aid workers estimated the death toll from March floods at as many as 100 people.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

**71 injured in Turkish train collision**

**ISPARTA (AP)** — A train slammed into the back of a waiting train in a station in western Turkey, injuring at least 71 people, the Anadolu news agency reported Friday. One of the injured was in serious condition. The accident occurred late Thursday in the city of Isparta when a train carrying 55 passengers from the southern city of Burdur collided with a stationary train with 130 people on board.

**Israeli warplanes violate Cypriot flight zone — report**

**NICOSIA (AFP)** — Six Israeli F-16 warplanes violated the Nicosia flight information region Wednesday, the official CNA news agency quoted foreign ministry sources as saying Thursday. The ministry was to raise the matter Friday with the Israeli authorities, the sources added. They said the violation occurred around 1100 GMT near the airport of Paphos in the west of the island. Israeli Ambassador Shmuel Tzur told CNA that "up to the moment there was no official protest" from the Cypriot government. He mentioned that the two coun-

tries' civil aviation authorities have an agreement regarding the use by Israeli aircraft of the Nicosia flight information region.

**\$3,000 a month 'go-up' in smoke in Netanyahu's office**

**TEL AVIV (AFP)** — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and two top aides burn up \$3,000 in taxpayers' money each month smoking deluxe cigars, the Yediot Ahronot newspaper reported Friday. According to the newspaper, Mr. Netanyahu, his spokesman Shai Bazzak and Cabinet Secretary Danny Naveh smoke each week a box of top grade cigars made by the Davidoff firm. The boxes cost about \$750 a piece for a grand total of \$3,000 per month, paid for out of the general operating budget for the prime minister's office, the newspaper said. Yediot Ahronot said Mr. Netanyahu refused to smoke only Cuban cigars, but switched to the Dominican Republic-grown Davidoffs after becoming prime minister in June 1996 — a gesture towards the United States which enforces a trade embargo on the regime of Cuban President Fidel Castro.

JORDAN TELEVISION	
Tel. 77311-19	
<b>PROGRAMME TWO</b>	
16:10 Cartoon — The Real Adventures of Jonny Quest	
16:30 French Programmes	
18:00 Square One TV	
18:30 Drama — Neighbours	
19:00 French Programme — L'oeuf de Colomb	
19:15 News headlines	
19:35 Quiz Show — You Bet Your Life	
20:00 Cinema, Cinema	
20:30 Prism	
21:10 Drama — Sirens	
22:00 News in English	
22:30 Feature film	
23:59 Comedy — "Are You Being Served?"	
00:20 End of TX.	
PRAYER TIMES	
04:48 Fajr	
06:08 (Sunrise) Duha	
12:37 Dhuhr	
16:12 Asr	
19:05 Maghreb	
20:26 Isha	
CHURCHES	
St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swefifeh, Tel. 5920740	
Assemblies of God Church Tel. 4632785	
St. Joseph Church Tel.	

## JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

WEATHER	
Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology	
Hot weather conditions will prevail for the three coming days. Temperature will rise above average by 7-10 degrees centigrade, and winds will be southeasterly moderate. In Aqaba it will be hot, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.	
Min./Max. temp.	
Amman ..... 16/30	
Aqaba ..... 20/39	
Deserts ..... 12/32	
Jordan Valley ..... 18/36	
Yesterday's high temperatures:	
Amman 29 Aqaba 37 Humidity readings: Amman 18 per cent. Aqaba 38 per cent.	
USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS	
<b>NIGHT DUTY</b>	
AMMAN:	
Dr. Mukhlis Mazahrah 820425	
Dr. Wissam Hazyrah ..... 748363	
Dr. Hattin Hammoun ..... 6749840	
Dr. Abdul Hadi Tayyib ..... 4620115	

FIRAS PHARMACY	
Ferdows pharmacy ..... 5661912	
Al Asma pharmacy ..... 778336	
Naimurkh pharmacy ..... 4623672	
Al Salam pharmacy ..... 4636730	
Yaacoub pharmacy ..... 4644948	
Shmeisani pharmacy ..... 4637660	
Najib pharmacy ..... 847632	
<b>IRBID:</b>	
Dr. Ahmad Qanu ..... 281484	
Al Quds pharmacy ..... 4644948	
<b>ZARQA:</b>	
Dr. Salah Saffarini ..... 987565	
Khalifeh pharmacy ..... 985417	
EMERGENCIES	
Food Control Centre ..... 4637111	
Civil Defence Department ..... 5661111	
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue ..... 4630341	
Civil Defence Emergency ..... 199	
Rescue Police 192 ..... 4621111, 4637777	
Fire Brigade ..... 4617101	
Blood Bank ..... 7751121	
Highway Police ..... 845402	
Traffic Police ..... 896390	
Public Security Dept. .... 4630321	
Hotel Complaints ..... 5605800	
Price Complaints ..... 5661176	
Water & Sewerage Complaints ..... 897467	
Amman Municipality Complaints ..... 787111	
Telephone Information (directory assistance) ..... 121	
Overseas Calls ..... 010230	

HOSPITALS	
<b>AMMAN:</b>	
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 5921199	
The Islamic, Abdi ..... 5666131/7	
Hussein Medical Centre Tel. 836813, 856856	
Khalidi Maternity ..... 4642816	
Akileh Maternity ..... 4642441/2	
Jabal Amman Maternity 4642362	
Malhas, J. Amman ..... 4636140	
Palestine, Shmeisani ..... 5607071	
Shmeisani Hospital ..... 5669131	
Al-Muasher Hospital 5667227/9	
Al-Ahli, Abdali ..... 5664164/6	
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 777101/3	
Al-Bashir ..... 7751112/6	
Army, Marka ..... 891611/15	
Queen Alia Hospital 5602240/50	
Amal Hospital ..... 5674155	
<b>Central Amman Telephone Repairs</b> ..... 4623101	
Abdali Tel. Repairs ..... 5661101	
Jordan Television ..... 773111	
Radio Jordan ..... 774111	
Water Authority ..... 5689100	
J. Electricity Authority ..... 815615	
Electric Power Co. .... 4636381	
RJ Flight Information ..... 44-53200	
Queen Alia Int. Airport ..... 44-53200	

ZARQA:	
Zarqa Govt. Hospital	(09)883323
Zarqa National Hospital	(09)900560
Ibn Sina Hospital ..... 09/986732	
Al Hikma Modern Hospital	(09)990990
IRBID:	
Princess Basma Hospital	(02)275555
Greek Catholic Hospital	(02)272275
Ibn Al Nafes Hospital	(02)247100
AQABA:	
Princess Haya Hospital	103314111

ROYAL JORDANIAN (RJ) FLIGHTS	
07:10 ..... Aden (RJ)	
08:10 ..... Tel Aviv (RJ)	
08:15 ..... Aqaba (RJ)	
09:30 ..... Damascus (RJ)	
09:45 ..... New Delhi (RJ)	
10:25 ..... Beirut (RJ)	
10:30 ..... Jeddah (RJ)	
10:30 ..... Karachi, Dubai (RJ)	
10:50 ..... Doha, Bahrain (RJ)	
11:00 ..... Colombo (RJ)	
15:30 ..... Jeddah (add) (RJ)	
15:35 ..... New York, Amsterdam (RJ)	
17:05 ..... Cairo (RJ)	
19:10 ..... London, Berlin (RJ)	
20:25 ..... Lenz (add) (RJ)	
22:05 ..... Ghardaqah (add) (RJ)	
00:00 ..... Paris (RJ)	
00:00 ..... Frankfurt (RJ)	
04:00 ..... Jeddah (RJ)	
05:30 ..... Bangkok (RJ)	
ARRIVALS	
06:05 London, Damascus (BA)	
14:10 Abu Dhabi, Doha (GF)	
15:05 ..... Vienna (OS)	
18:00 ..... Dubai, Muscat (EK)	
19:00 ..... Paris (AF)	
19:05 ..... Frankfurt (LH)	
23:35 ..... Cairo (MS)	
23:40 ..... Amsterdam (KL)	
23:40 ..... Beirut (ME)	
01:05 London, Damascus (BA)	
02:05 ..... Belgrade (JU)	
03:00 ..... Rome (AZ)	

DEPARTURES	
<b>Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights</b>	
06:00 ..... Aqaba (RJ)	
06:05 ..... Tel Aviv (RJ)	
06:35 ..... Beirut (RJ)	
08:00 ..... Aqaba, Lenz (add) (RJ)	
09:10 ..... Bangkok (RJ)	
10:30 ..... Jeddah (add) (RJ)	
12:00 ..... Geneva, Frankfurt (RJ)	
12:30 ..... Amsterdam, New York (RJ)	
13:00 ..... Paris (RJ)	
13:15 ..... Cairo (RJ)	
14:00 ..... London (RJ)	
14:45 ..... Brussels (RJ)	
14:55 ..... Madrid (RJ)	
17:00 ..... Ghardaqah (add) (RJ)	
21:10 ..... Riyadh, Dhahran (RJ)	
21:20 ..... Bombay (RJ)	
21:20 ..... Jeddah (RJ)	
22:00 ..... Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)	
22:30 ..... Jeddah (add) (RJ)	
01:30 ..... Aqaba, Paris (RJ)	
05:00 ..... Jeddah (add) (RJ)	
Other Flights	
07:00 ..... Beirut (ME)	
07:35 ..... Damascus, London (BA)	
15:00 Abu Dhabi, Bahrain (GF)	
15:50 ..... Vienna (OS)	
19:00 ..... Dubai (EK)	
00:40 ..... Beirut, Amsterdam (JU)	
13:10 ..... Belgrade (JU)	
04:00 ..... Rome (AZ)	
Royal Wings (RW)	
(No flights on Saturday)	

What's going on	
<b>EXHIBITIONS</b>	
Exhibition of works by Jordanian artists, including the late King Hussein, at the Royal Cultural Centre, until April 12.	
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**Iran says U.N. rights report displays 'prejudice'**

**TEHRAN (AFP)** — Iran on Friday criticised a U.N. human rights report for showing "prejudices" against the Islamic judicial system.

"This report took a positive approach to certain aspects of the human rights situation in Iran, but unfortunately it repeated the prejudices against Islam's judicial regime and the social and cultural peculiarities of Islamic societies," said Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Mahmoud Mohammadi.

Mr. Mohammadi said the report by Canadian Maurice Copthorne for the U.N. Human Rights Commission "ignored the cultural diversity" in Iran, the official IRNA news agency reported.

The report denounced the death sentence against British author Salman Rushdie, as well as numerous executions and stonings, but said Iran has made some progress on human rights nevertheless.

"Human rights do continue to be violated in Iran," it said. "The use of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment continues unabated."

The report highlighted the growing number of executions in Iran. According to the Iranian press, some 199 executions took place last year, 95 of them in public.

**NEWS IN BRIEF**

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# Home News

## Schools, government offices reopen after 'Eid holiday

AMMAN (J.T.) — Life in Jordan returns to normal today following a five-day public holiday marking 'Eid Al Adha (Feast of Sacrifice)', during which government departments, schools and public institutions were closed.

According to a report in the Al Rai daily, at least 7,400 Jordanians spent their holiday in Egyptian resorts, mainly Sharm Al Sheikh.

Abed Quntar, director of Royal Wings, a subsidiary of Royal Jordanian (RJ), was quoted by Al Rai as

saying that the airline organised 18 chartered flights, in addition to 12 flights by RJ and 10 flights by Egypt Air, to transport the holidaymakers.

He said 90 per cent of the flights flew to Sharm Al Sheikh, adding that some of the flights were delayed due to the congestion of vacationers at the airports.

According to Mr. Quntar, Jordanians chose to spend the holiday at Egyptian resorts due to special travel rates.

In addition, he said, Jordan

has been promoting travel programmes to Egypt in the wake of the Luxor terrorist attack on tourists last year and in implementation of resolutions passed by a regional conference on promoting tourism in Egypt in 1998.

In other developments during the 'Eid holiday in Jordan, the Civil Defence Department reported Thursday that a total of 144 accidents were reported. These included cases in which fire engines were called in to put out fires.

## Outgoing UNHCR representative thanks King, Crown Prince for continued support

AMMAN (Petra) — The representative of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Jordan has paid tribute to His Majesty King Hussein, HRH Crown Prince Hassan and the Jordanian government for the facilities that have enabled UNHCR to shoulder its humanitarian mission over the years.

In a statement marking the end of her 30-month tour of duty in Jordan, Zobida Hassim-Ashagrie noted that Prince Hassan

opened a regional meeting in Amman in March 1997 to devise a comprehensive formula addressing problems connected with migrants from areas in the Middle East and Asia.

She said the Asian and Middle East regions have witnessed the movement of eight million people over the past 17 years who have been displaced, many of whom landed in or passed through Jordan.

She also paid tribute to Prince Hassan for calling for the establishment of an international Zakat Fund in Islamic states in order to help address the problem of refugees.

Mrs. Hassim-Ashagrie noted that UNHCR's work with Jordan took place at the university level. She pointed out that Yarmouk University has opened a special centre

for cooperation with the UNHCR office in information related to refugees, adding that the UNHCR office in Amman provided the centre with \$20,000 worth of equipment needed for documentation.

Mrs. Hassim-Ashagrie said she has been appointed to a new post in Angola, where she will have to supervise the repatriation or settlement of 240,000 refugees.

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### NEWS IN BRIEF

Queen Noor receives well-wishers to mark 'Eid

AMMAN (J.T.) — On the occasion of 'Eid Al Adha, Her Majesty Queen Noor welcomed at Qasr Basman women community leaders from the country's governorates, representatives of national women's organisations and the wives of government and Royal Court officials, according to a press release. Deputising for the Queen, HRH Princess Ralyah visited the SOS Children's Village in Taharbour, where she chatted with the children and distributed presents among them, the statement said.

No Jordanians killed in Hajj stampede — minister

AMMAN (J.T.) — Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Abdul Salam Abadi on Friday said no Jordanian nationals were among those killed in a stampede during the religious 'stoning of Satan' ritual on the final day of the Hajj in Saudi Arabia. In a telephone interview with Jordan Television, Dr. Abadi said the accompanying Jordanian medical expedition was sent to hospitals to determine if there were any Jordanian casualties. He added that reports confirmed that no Jordanian pilgrims died in the stampede near the Holy City of Mecca. According to the Reuters news agency, 118 pilgrims died in a stampede in Mina, the location of the ritual. Twenty-four Indians were among the victims, with others from Egypt, Indonesia, Kuwait, Pakistan and Turkey.

Former Amman Mayor Fawzi dies

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali on Friday announced the death of Ahmad Fawzi, former minister of public works and former mayor of Amman. Amman Mayor Mamdouh Abadi also conveyed his condolences to the bereaved family.

### what's going on

#### EXHIBITIONS

\* Exhibition of works by Jordanian artists Ramin Rashed, Abdullah Tbaishat and Qasem Al Dwaifi at the Royal Cultural Centre, until April 16.

\* Paintings on handmade paper at Noor Al Hussein Foundation, off Wadi Saqra St. (Tel. 5699141/2), until April 25.

## Environmental NGO aiming to raise awareness on shared regional heritage

By Hasher Majoka  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — EcoPeace, a U.S.-registered environmental non-governmental organisation (NGO), has brought together a number of NGOs across the region for the first time to raise awareness on the challenges facing environmental heritage sites that span international borders.

Over 200 local NGOs from Jordan, Egypt, the Palestinian territories and Israel are now working under the coordination of EcoPeace to respond to the needs of the environment and potential disasters, which know no political boundaries.

Protection of joint environmental heritage demands combined action by the countries sharing it, Munqeth Mehayr, a Jordanian board member of EcoPeace, told the Jordan Times.

Established in 1995 with an initial \$50,000 grant from United States Agency for International Development, EcoPeace concentrates primarily on three important shared environmental sites. These include the Gulf of Aqaba, the Dead Sea and the surrounding Rift Valley, and the eastern Mediterranean Sea, he added.

EcoPeace, through its regional operations office in Arab east Jerusalem and branch offices in each of the four countries, seeks to highlight the problems facing these sites and help find solutions. Currently, eight volunteers from the European Union are working in the region. Two of the volunteers currently stationed in Jordan are assigned to work with the Royal Society for Conservation of Nature (RSCN) and Jordan Royal Ecological Diving Society (JREDS), Mr. Mehayr said.

EcoPeace has launched sustainable development projects in both the Red and Dead sea areas and is striving to highlight the potentially disastrous consequences of unsustainable development, which he said

would threaten the region with the loss of these two unique environmental treasures.

"The Gulf of Aqaba, essentially a giant lake connected to the already-polluted Red Sea by the narrow Straits of Tiran, has some of the greatest diversity in marine life in the world," Mr. Mehayr said. Over 100 species of fish and over 300 kinds of hard and soft coral reefs are to be found in the gulf. Moreover, it is the site of the most northerly coral reefs to be found anywhere in the world, he added.

However, this unique ecosystem is threatened by the ever-increasing development along its shores. There are plans to set up new oil refineries along the coast of the Gulf, along with a huge projected increase in tourist facilities and related infrastructure, Mr. Mehayr said.

In response, EcoPeace, with financial assistance from Germany's Heinrich Böll Foundation, has launched a sustainable tourism development programme for the area.

EcoPeace volunteers have provided hotels, resorts and other tourism-related institutions with information to help them conserve electricity, recycle water, dispose of sewage in an eco-friendly manner and conserve resources in general, Mr. Mehayr said. Furthermore, EcoPeace is assisting with sustainable tourism development studies and coordinating its activities with local officials, he added.

EcoPeace's other sustainable tourism development project, in the Dead Sea area, seeks to address similar environmental concerns. It intends to develop a coordinated strategy for checking the annual shrinkage of the Dead Sea, ensure tourism-related development is sustainable in the long term and find possible solutions to the harm already done to the area by unchecked tourism development and extensive potash extraction on both sides of the Dead Sea, Mr. Mehayr said.

## Iraq blasts British plan

(Continued from page 1)

worth of oil every six months because of technical problems caused by damage inflicted during the Gulf war and the sanctions imposed after its 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

Mr. Cook said in a speech last month that the meeting, grouping all the key bodies, including U.N. agencies and various non-governmental groups, would look at the best ways of spending the money and at what programmes would be implemented.

Britain and the United States have accused Iraqi President Saddam Hussein of deliberately blocking the "oil-for-food" scheme and say he is to blame for his people's suffering.

Mr. Sahhaf said Britain "was not committed to removing the sanctions against Iraq after making sure that it has implemented its commitments."

He added: "British officials have in February and March issued anti-Iraq statements and have taken part actively in

fabricating lies and mobilised their naval forces in the Arabian Gulf to set the stage for the launch of a new American-British assault against Iraq."

A U.S. naval armada remains poised in the Gulf, but U.N. officials now speak of a new chapter in relations with Baghdad following the successful completion last week of the first round of U.N. inspections of Iraq's presidential palaces.

A Feb. 23 pact between Iraq and U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan, allowing the inspectors unfettered access to all eight sites, averted a U.S. military strike against Iraq.

Mr. Sahhaf urged all parties that have received invitations not to attend the meeting. "This conference is nothing but a mistaken attempt to create a new crisis," he added.

"Iraq's interest lies first of all in lifting the tyrannical embargo imposed eight years ago, which makes Britain not suitable to talk objectively of any contribution to the benefit of Iraq and the Iraqi people," he added.

## Amman to host IPU meeting in 2000

AMMAN (J.T.) — The speaker of the Lower House of Parliament, Sa'd Hayel Sour, has been informed by the president of the International Parliamentary Union (IPU), Miguel Martinez, that the union has decided to hold its April 2000 meeting in Amman.

According to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Mr. Sour, who is attending the 99th meeting of the IPU in the Namibian capital of Windhoek, praised Mr. Martinez's role in the IPU. For his part, Mr. Martinez expressed his appreciation of Jordan's Hashemite leadership and the country's citizens.

During remarks to a preparatory meeting of Arab delegations to the IPU session, Mr. Sour demanded that the Palestinian Legislative Council be admitted as a full IPU member.

He also asked Arab states to support efforts by the Arab Parliamentary Union (APU) to be recognised as an associate member of the IPU.

Mr. Sour was received by Namibian President Sam Nujoma, to whom he conveyed greetings from His Majesty King Hussein and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan.

## Akef Fayeze, veteran politician, dies at 76

AMMAN (J.T.) — The body of the late Akef Fayeze, a prominent Jordanian tribal and political leader who died on Wednesday, was laid to rest Thursday at a cemetery in his hometown of Um Al Amad, south of Amman.

His Majesty King Hussein, accompanied by HRH Prince Hamzah, HRH Prince Ghazi Ben Mohammad, the King's cultural secretary, and Chief of the Royal Court Fayeze Tarsawneh visited the home of the late Mr. Fayeze and offered

their condolences to his family. They also visited the Bari Sakher tribe to offer their condolences to Fayeze's clan on the death of their tribal leader, who passed away at the age of 76.

King Hussein delegated Chief Chamberlain Prince Ra'd Ben Zeid to attend the funeral, in which representatives of HRH Crown Prince Hassan and HRH Prince Mohammad, along with Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali and prominent Jordanian personalities also took part.

Prince Hassan delegated HRH Prince Rasheed to convey the Crown Prince's condolences to Bari Sakher tribe on the death of Fayeze.

Fayeze, who was born in Amman in 1922, served in a number of official posts, including the post of minister in a number of governments, was elected member of the Lower House of Parliament four times and was elected House speaker, in addition to serving as chief of the Royal Court for tribal affairs.



## U.N.: Iraq still hiding data on biological arms

(Continued from page 1)

of Iraqi cooperation on inspections, including the recent visits to so-called presidential sites that Baghdad had previously declared off-limits.

U.N. inspectors said in the biological report that Iraq's disclosures of its weapons capabilities and missiles and its claim that its biological programme was destroyed in 1991 were "incomplete and inadequate." That report covered the result of technical meetings on biological weapons and missiles between U.N. experts and their Iraqi counterparts in Vienna, Austria, from March 20-27.

The report was particularly critical of Iraq's attitude going into the Vienna Technical Evaluation meeting and noted that Baghdad didn't send qualified experts.

"They did not grasp the opportunity offered," the report said. "The attitude of

Iraq as evinced by the TEM toward the discussions was disappointing and shows no change since 1995."

In the report, U.N. inspectors made extensive references to a report Iraq issued in September which was hailed as Baghdad's "full, final and complete" assessment of its biological weapons programmes. The U.N. experts said the report "contains major mistakes, inconsistencies and gaps in information." Specifically, the U.N. document dismissed Baghdad's description of its production ability for deadly biological agent anthrax, calling the account "implausible."

"Bulk BW [biological weapons] agent production appears to be considerably understated," particularly for botulinum and anthrax, the report said.

Baghdad's claims about the destruction of warheads that can carry biological weapons "cannot be reconciled with

physical evidence," the report said.

The report noted that Iraq recognised the need to improve its accounting and promised to do so.

Iraq's deputy ambassador, Saeed Hasan, said he couldn't comment on the report until Iraqi officials had seen it.

In the report on Iraq's nuclear capabilities, U.N. experts said inspections over the last six months "have not revealed indications of the existence in Iraq of prohibited equipment, materials or of the conduct of prohibited activities."

Those inspections included the visits to the eight presidential sites, opened to U.N. inspectors following a Feb. 23 accord brokered by Secretary-General Kofi Annan and Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

The report mentions previously reported evidence that Iraq tried to get nuclear material from a foreigner, whose

country wasn't given. U.N. experts interviewed the foreigner and advised the country of the deal.

It also notes a previous U.N. request that Baghdad prove its claim that it had declared its nuclear programme abandoned. No such declaration exists, the report said.

It notes that U.N. experts still need information about a number of sites, and says that in general "there is a continuing need for improvement in the consistency and accuracy of the data." But Baghdad's most recent "full, final and complete" declaration summarising its nuclear program has "fulfilled its obligation," according to the report. That declaration is different than its biological declaration.

"The summary is regarded by the IAEA to be consistent with the technically coherent picture of Iraq's clandestine nuclear program developed by the IAEA," the report said.

## Saudis say stampeding pilgrims ignored official instructions

(Continued from page 1)

wounded to hospitals, the Saudi Gazette reported.

"If security forces had not intervened to stop the rush, thousands of pilgrims would have died," a police official said on condition of anonymity.

Before the stampede began, police had been holding back crowds outside the area where

pilgrims cast pebbles at three pillars symbolising the temptations of Satan. Saudi officials say Asian Muslims tend not to believe in a symbolic throw and rush to get close enough for their pebbles to strike the pillars.

When security forces began to allow pilgrims through, the crowd surged setting off the stampede.

Many elderly pilgrims faint-

ed and were trampled. Some people, who were standing on an elevated walkway on their way to the pillars, plunged some 5 meters to their deaths.

Police and doctors said those killed were from Malaysia, Indonesia, India, Pakistan and the Middle East.

Thursday was the final day of the pilgrimage. Ambulances rushed to the scene, and Saudi television

showed soldiers carrying a body out on a stretcher. One soldier was trying to revive another casualty whose face was covered by an oxygen mask. Another offered water to an elderly man, who grabbed the bottle with a trembling hand.

Hundreds of pilgrims lined up outside Mina hospitals Thursday night, anxious to know the fate of their relatives.

Among them was Ziad Daher from Syria, who was looking for his brother Farouk.

"I lost him in the crowd about 12 noon," he said, tears in his eyes. "I haven't seen him since." Scattered umbrellas, shirts, slippers and shoes littered the scene of the fatal stampede late Thursday night.

After the stampede, only a few thousand pilgrims were at the site stoning the pillars.

## N. Ireland breakthrough reached

(Continued from page 1)

will be expected to govern their land of 1.6 million people together in a 108-member assembly.

That would end 26 years of "direct rule" from London, instituted after the British abolished a Protestant-dominated parliament that had governed Northern Ireland since its creation in 1921.

The parties would participate in a governing cabinet, with the largest party taking the role of a prime minister. Critically, the new Belfast assembly will be expected to cooperate formally with the Irish Republic in a north-south council of lawmakers. This measure is considered essential to win support from the north's Catholics, who generally favour the unification of Ireland.

But the Protestant bloc appeared to have won a substantial concession, because the Belfast assembly will have the right to approve decisions taken by its members in the cross-border council. Catholics had pushed for the council to wield independent powers.

Critically, the IRA-allied Sinn Fein party — brought into the talks eight months ago following an Irish

Republican Army truce — appears to have accepted the agreement, which stops so far short of its traditional goal of uniting Ireland.

Before the accord was announced, however, Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams said he would need the formal approval of grassroots members of the party, whose annual conference is scheduled later this month.

The Ulster Unionists, Northern Ireland's main pro-British Protestant party, will also face stern opposition from Protestants who suspect that any settlement will concede too much to those seeking Irish unification.

The accord will have to be approved by majority votes next month in both Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic, where voters also will be asked to approve the softening of their constitution's territorial claim to Northern Ireland.

The agreement does not mean a certain end to shootings and bombings in Northern Ireland, since dissidents have already broken away from both the IRA and those pro-British paramilitary groups who called truces to get into the talks.

## Hamas rejects PNA's demands to stop accusations

(Continued from page 1)

slain by Mr. Awadallah in a fight over leadership.

Mr. Awadallah reportedly heads Hamas' armed wing, Izzedin Al Qassam, to the West Bank and like Sharif is wanted by Israel for his role in bomb attacks.

Hamas vehemently denied the police claim, then escalated tensions by accusing Col. Rajub of killing Sharif and accusing Mr. Abdul Rahim and other Palestinian officials of seeking to cover-up the murder in a bid to appease Israel.

Mr. Abdul Rahim denied the authority was seeking a confrontation with Hamas, the main Palestinian group opposed to peace with Israel, but said splits within the movement were a possible "threat to Palestinian security."

"We are not waging a campaign against Hamas as a political group. But this is a dangerous development and could have consequences for Palestinian security," he said.

"We will not allow Hamas to run its own underground courts which issue death sentences and throw bodies in the street," he said.

President Arafat's administration and Hamas clashed previously in 1995, during a power struggle soon after the authority's creation which climaxed when Palestinian police killed 13 Hamas members during a march by the group.

Israel has demanded that the PNA dismantle Hamas as a condition for pursuing the peace process, which has been deadlocked for more than a year.

## Naddehs, Sa'ad laid to rest, one of two stolen cars found

(Continued from page 1)

newspaper said that the police have found several fingerprints at the murder scene and an investigation was carried out to identify these prints.

A lawyer who was very close to Naddeh told the Jordan Times that the prominent lawyer was in London with his family one day before he was murdered.

"He was advised to take some security precautions but he refused and said that neither bodyguards nor anything else could prevent death," the lawyer said.

"We informed the police about these threats and took some measures which were not enough to protect his life," the lawyer added.

Naddeh, a leading expert in administrative lawsuits, undertook court cases that involved the alleged embezzlement of JD 180 million in the Amman Bank for Investment and the Jordan Spin-

ning and Weaving Company.

More than 17 persons were charged in the case, including prominent businessmen and lawyers.

Naddeh also defended suspects who were charged in the case of the Petra Bank.

Sa'ad was among two psychiatrists who testified in the trial of Ahmad Dakamseh, the Jordanian soldier who shot to death seven Israeli schoolgirls in Baqura on March 1997.

His testimony helped in reducing Dakamseh's sentence from death to life imprisonment.



## Yeltsin protégé Kiriyenko faces crushing defeat in parliament

MOSCOW (AFP) — Russian would-be prime minister Sergei Kiriyenko tried to persuade a sceptical parliament Friday that he was the man to pull Russia out of the economic mire, but the 35-year-old technocrat was facing a humiliating defeat.

Mr. Kiriyenko has been Boris Yeltsin's protégé since the Russian president sacked Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin and his government on March 23, but deputies in the lower house state Duma remained unimpressed, and were set to reject his candidacy in a first-round vote Friday.

The vote was expected to take place soon after 1100 GMT.

Any last hopes of a reasonable result for Mr. Kiriyenko disappeared when the only party hitherto supporting him in the 450-seat Duma, the ultra-nationalist LDPR bloc led by Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, said it would not give him its vote.

"Our faction has decided in its entirety not to vote for

Kiriyenko's candidacy," said Alexei Mitrofanov, number two in the LDPR, which has 51 seats.

The pro-government Our Home Is Russia bloc, with 65 seats, said most of its deputies would support Mr. Kiriyenko, but the Kremlin newcomer appeared hard pressed for any other votes.

All other parties in parliament have expressed reservations about his candidacy, with the Communist-led leftist bloc, which almost commands a majority on its own, pledging a universal no vote.

Parliament has three chances to approve the president's candidate. Three no votes entitle the head of state to dissolve the chamber and call fresh legislative elections.

Mr. Kiriyenko did not falter as he delivered a rapid-fire, 30-minute appraisal of the critical problems facing the Russian economy and his plans to stave off financial crisis.

"What worries me more than my own candidacy is the path the country is taking," Mr. Kiriyenko told the

Duma. "Now we must realise that the situation is very difficult."

Mr. Kiriyenko outlined budgetary rigour and defence of the ruble as two main planks of his economic programme, but also stressed the need for administrative reforms to root out corruption.

In a gloomy assessment, Mr. Kiriyenko warned that the federal budget stood to lose 10 billion rubles (\$1.5 billion) in 1998 from the global oil price slump, and Russia's external debt had become "intolerable," rising to \$120 billion, compared with \$109 billion in 1997.

If nothing was done to rectify the situation "by 2003 some 70 per cent of the federal budget will be given over to (external) debt," he said.

He said that he planned to fill his cabinet with "professionals" and added that the new government would be slimmed down in comparison with its predecessor.

"A good state is a modest state," Mr. Kiriyenko said. "The federal government

must start by reforming itself. If administrative costs are to be reduced, we must start with the government."

The baby-faced, bespectacled former energy minister, who has just one year's experience in the government, chose not to brighten up his economics lecture with colourful graphics, although the liberal daily *Sevodayna* said technicians had worked for two days preparing such visual aids.

In a radio address earlier Friday, Mr. Yeltsin said he had "no other candidacy" to present to parliament should Mr. Kiriyenko fail to pass the first vote.

"We have been living without a government for too long," Mr. Yeltsin said. "Perhaps the Duma is ready to wait for another week or more, but the economy will not tolerate it."

Kremlin spokesman Sergei Yastrzhembskiy, quoted by ITAR-TASS, said Mr. Yeltsin would propose Mr. Kiriyenko's name to parliament immediately after a "no" vote, if parliament rejected his nominee.



Communist Party leader Gennady Zyuganov (left) listens to the address of Prime Minister-designate Sergei Kiriyenko in the state Duma. Kiriyenko shrugged off opposition demands to form a coalition government and said Friday his cabinet would include only professionals (Reuters photo)

## 20,000 march peacefully through Pristina

PRISTINA, Yugoslavia (AFP) — Twenty thousand ethnic Albanians marched peacefully through Pristina Friday as their leader Ibrahim Rugova promised that peace talks with the Belgrade government "will certainly take place."

The street demonstration by the majority Albanians, who are seeking autonomy for the southern Serbian province, drew no apparent police intervention, contrary to a protest Thursday in which police injured at least five demonstrators.

Friday's demonstrators sat on the steps of Serbian government buildings, making the "V" for victory sign before dispersing after about 30 minutes of instructions from organisers.

Mr. Rugova, at his weekly press conference, continued to object to the talk venue chosen by the Serbs. Kosovo's government buildings, he said, were "intended more to give the impression of wanting to negotiate than actually moving things forward."

Mr. Rugova, head of the Kosovo Democratic League (KLDL), the main opposition to the Serbian regime in the province, gave no indication whether he would attend negotiations scheduled at the same place by a Serbian government delegation next Thursday.

"The Serbs are going to put on the same show," he said, adding however that he thought talks with top Yugoslav officials would eventually take place, at which "each party will enter the discussions with

their own proposals."

He said the negotiating agenda drafted by his advisers and released Wednesday "should pose no obstacle to the talks," which he said would take place "necessarily in the presence of a third party."

The platform is built around "principles of self-determination and independence for Kosovo."

The Albanians have boy-

cotted 10 sessions of talks scheduled in Pristina by the Serbian authorities, which for their part have rejected the Kosovo Albanians' demand that talks take place in the presence of foreign mediation.

A Serbian government delegation has been in Pristina since March 12 waiting in vain to meet with ethnic Albanian representatives.

## Referendum on Kosovo a delaying tactic

BONN (AFP) — German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel condemned as "a delaying tactic" a Serbian decision to hold a referendum on international mediation in the Kosovo crisis, in a statement Friday.

Mr. Kinkel said the April 23 referendum, proposed by Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic and accepted by parliament Wednesday, was "an avoidance manoeuvre, a step in the wrong direction, and a new barrier in the path of settling the conflict."

The international community would not "be influenced by delaying tactics so transparent," said Mr. Kinkel.

He warned Belgrade it risked facing sanctions, notably a suspension of credit, when the international Contact Group on the former Yugoslavia next meets at the end of April. In a meeting on March 25, the six-power Contact Group decided to delay imposing sanctions by four weeks to give Mr. Milosevic more time to enter into dialogue with Kosovo's ethnic Albanians.

Mr. Kinkel said "no notable progress" had been made, and accused Mr. Milosevic of failing to respond adequately to the demand for "credible dialogue." He said that "an exclusively Serbian dialogue will not work."

Albanian representatives have turned down offers of dialogue with a Serbian government delegation until Yugoslavia agrees to international mediation, a demand Belgrade has rejected so far.

"Belgrade's return ticket into Europe, international organisations, and financial institutions depends on its attitude over the Kosovo question," Mr. Kinkel said.

He said Kosovo Albanian demands to end rule from Belgrade were legitimate, although he condemned as unacceptable any terrorist action by Albanian separatists.

The ethnic Albanians who make up 90 per cent of the population of the formerly autonomous province want independence or at least full republic status within Yugoslavia, on a par with Serbia and Montenegro.

## U.S. welcomes Bulgaria's CD clampdown

SOFIA (AFP) — U.S. authorities welcomed Friday a clampdown by Bulgaria on pirate CD makers, noting Sofia had taken "significant steps" to fight the problem after it was threatened with trade sanctions.

The U.S. embassy here agreed with the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI) that Bulgaria, with a reputation as one of the world's biggest manufacturers, is serious about fighting the problem.

But it added: "What is important now is a continued, sustained commitment over time to addressing the issue."

"The embassy agrees in general terms with the statement made by the IFPI representative yesterday," said an embassy statement. "We too think that the government of Bulgaria has taken significant steps to address this problem."

"We are persuaded of the government's commitment to resolving this issue."

The IFPI said Thursday it was "encouraged" by Sofia's clampdown on pirate CD makers in Bulgaria. "The government is serious in their intentions," said Ian Grant of the London-based IFPI.

The IFPI, the key international body policing such matters, called last year for neighbouring countries including Greece to impose trade sanctions on Bulgaria.

In November U.S. authorities joined the call, giving Sofia an ultimatum of April 1998 to stop the production and distribution of pirate CDs.

## Cambodia police deny attack on U.N. rights worker

PHNOM PENH (R) — A Cambodian police chief Friday denied that security officials beat up a U.N. human rights worker and said the man was attacked by people in a squatter community.

High Commissioner for Human Rights Mary Robinson, who visited Cambodia in January, Thursday accused Cambodian security forces of beating one of her staff members and demanded a full investigation by Phnom Penh.

But Phnom Penh municipal police commissioner, General Neth Savoeun, denied it was security men who attacked the rights worker on April 2.

"I deny any report that security officials or police beat a U.N. human rights worker," Neth Savoeun told Reuters.

"The human rights worker had a problem with squatter people when he tried to get close and take pictures," he said.

A U.N. official in the capital Phnom Penh said the rights worker was beaten by a group of men, some in plain clothes, some in security force uniforms, when he went to investigate a demonstration as part of the U.N.'s normal monitoring activities.

The man had been travelling with two colleagues in a vehicle with

U.N. licence plates. At one point during the incident police surrounded and trained guns on the vehicle, one human rights worker said.

The attack came as political tension ran high in Phnom Penh following street fights between supporters and opponents of deposed co-premier Prince Norodom Ranariddh.

Mr. Ranariddh, ousted by his co-premier Hun Sen in a coup last year, returned to Cambodia for a four-day visit on March 30.

The United Nations Human Rights Office in Phnom Penh employs about 50 staff members, including local staff.

Thomas Hammarberg, U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan's special representative for human rights in Cambodia, said on Monday the pace of political killings was picking up.

He told a news conference in Geneva Monday that 50 opposition figures had been killed since August in addition to 41 documented executions by security forces following Hun Sen's coup.

The United Nations has agreed to coordinate observation of Cambodia's election on July 26 but reserved the right to halt aid over concerns about problems which might hinder a fair poll, including human

## Thousands of Indonesian students turn up at peaceful rally in capital

JAKARTA (AFP) — Thousands of students turned out Friday for a peaceful rally in the grounds of a Muslim school calling for political reforms and a new leadership as lightly-armed security forces stood by.

Some 5,000 students listened attentively as a member from the Union of Muslim Students in Java delivered a fiery one-hour speech after Friday prayer, calling on the government to take responsibility for the current crisis.

"The government must take responsibility for the crisis and ask for the people's forgiveness," the speaker shouted from a podium to a sea of women in traditional Muslim head-dresses and men in traditional batik shirts.

No arrests or clashes were reported during the rally that lasted well into Friday afternoon on the fenced-in soccer field of the Al Azhar school in South Jakarta.

"Is there really no one else in this nation of 200 million people that can lead this country," he asked the crowd, who intermittently voiced their agreement with cries of "Allahu Akbar" (God is Great).

He called on students, members of the parliament and the general population to be critical and not to waiver from demands for an end to the corruption,

collusion and nepotism pervasive in the Indonesian government.

"We call on the people not to believe everything said by the government and to remain critical," he said, as the crowd brandished banners calling for "peaceful reformation" and for the military to "protect the people, not nepotism."

"We are not the enemy ... and we do not want to clash with ABRI," he said, referring to the Indonesian armed forces.

At least 20 students were injured in clashes with the military in the central Java city of Yogyakarta earlier in the month, when security forces tried to prevent students from marching from their campus into the city centre.

University students across Indonesia have been staging rallies since the end of February demanding an end to the 32-year rule of Indonesian President Suharto, who has begun a seventh five-year term in office.

Campus rallies have been tolerated by security forces provided they remain on university grounds, but there have been clashes when students tried to take their protests onto the streets.

Several students have reportedly disappeared after the clashes and at least 11 are still missing.

## Colombian rebels could win war against military

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Unless Colombia's military get help, they could lose the war against well-armed leftist guerrillas, within five years and the country could turn into a "narco-state," The Washington Post said Friday.

Citing a U.S. Defence Intelligence Agency report, the daily said leftist rebels in Colombia number more than 20,000 and are armed with small aircraft and shoulder-fired missiles brought from former Soviet bloc countries with drug money.

The Colombian military, according to a summary of the report obtained by the daily and two sources with knowledge of the full text, have proved to be inept, ill-trained and poorly equipped, with only one sixth of 120,000 troops equipped and trained for combat.

The rebels, mainly the 15,000-strong Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the 5,000-strong National Liberation Army

(ELN), now control more than 40 per cent of Colombia. About one third of FARC units and half of the ELN's are involved in drug trafficking, which generated tens of millions of dollars to finance guerrilla operations, according to U.S. and Colombian intelligence.

If the rebel movement continues to grow and the Colombian government ceases to function effectively, the report said, Colombia could turn into a "narco-state" within five years.

The deteriorating situation in Colombia has sparked debate in the White House and Pentagon over how the United States can respond to the threat, the daily said.

The U.S. administration is debating whether to increase its \$100 million anti-drug aid programme to Colombia and allow it to be used for counter-insurgency purposes without raising concern over human rights abuses by the Colombian military.

## UNICEF protests detention of local worker in Congo

KINSHASA (AFP) — UNICEF said Friday that one of its workers had been detained since early March in the east of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and again refused allegations of aiding rebels there.

The worker, a DRC national, was not told the reason for his arrest, according to the U.N. Children's Fund representative to the DRC, Ibrahim Jabr, adding that he was in "daily" contact with the office of President Laurent Kabila over the detention.

The UNICEF representative also "categorically" denied an allegation by Mr. Kabila that the aid agency was serving as a "mail box" for eastern rebels known as Mai-Mai, who last week attacked a town in North Kivu province before being repelled by government forces.

Late Thursday Mr. Kabila's office repeated the allegation. The president's communications adviser Dominique Sakombi said: "The statement of President Laurent-Desire Kabila that certain international bodies are in collusion with the rebels in the east of the DRC is well-founded."

UNICEF "effectively serves as mail box for the

Mai-Mai rebels. The Congolese government has a complete dossier which proves it," Mr. Sakombi said.

Mr. Kabila, on a visit Monday to the North Kivu provincial capital Goma, specifically accused UNICEF of serving as a "mail service" for the Mai-Mai, according to official radio.

UNICEF in Geneva protested Wednesday, spokeswoman Marie Heuze saying: "We protest energetically. We do not accept to be treated like this."

Ms. Heuze said UNICEF was shocked by Mr. Kabila's remarks, which came as UNICEF was signing a pact in Kinshasa on the rehabilitation of some 350 child soldiers.

Last year, UNICEF gave \$22.2 million to various aid programmes in the DRC mostly concerning health, water, education and "children in difficulty."

Relations between U.N. aid agencies and Mr. Kabila have been strained since soon after he and his rebels overthrew the dictator Mobutu Sese Seko last May.

The United Nations has accused Mr. Kabila's rebels of massacring thousands of Rwandan refugees during the seven-month rebellion.

## Karadzic's military mastermind slips into obscurity

SARAJEVO (AFP) — While the world anticipates the arrest of Radovan Karadzic, the most wanted war crimes suspect of Bosnia's 1992-95 war, his military mastermind has slipped into obscurity.

General Ratko Mladic, 55, stands co-indicted with Mr. Karadzic for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide, and is just as keenly sought by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in The Hague.

But he is very much a man in the shadows, a passionate Serb nationalist who oversaw the brutal "ethnic cleansing" of Muslim and Croat areas, but who now has dropped from view as Bosnia-Herzegovina tries to

put the war behind it. "He's gone completely into oblivion," a European diplomat in Sarajevo said.

"In any event, Mladic is not the political threat that Karadzic is," the diplomat told AFP. "He is not part of the political dynamics of Republika Srpska," as Bosnia's Serb entity is known.

Mr. Mladic, succinctly described in an early ICTY wanted poster as "short, stocky, red-faced," has, like Mr. Karadzic, not been seen for many months. His whereabouts are just as mysterious.

Last month the Belgrade weekly *Nedeljnik* Telegraph, quoting confidential sources, said he was "writing memoirs with a team of his wartime officers" in the east-

ern Bosnian town of Han Pijesak, his wartime headquarters.

Foreign intelligence services are well aware of Mr. Mladic's activities "because powerful publishers from the West are interested in his memoirs," it said.

Last July he was reportedly on holiday by the Adriatic Sea in Montenegro with his wife and 15 bodyguards, but this was denied by the government in Podgorica. Other rumours put him in Belgrade, where his son is said to live.

Maojlo Mitrovanovic, Mr. Mladic's deputy during the 1992-95 war, and now defence minister of a new Western-backed government in Republika Srpska, said in January that the general was well-protected.

"He is safe," Mr. Mitrovanovic told Svedok, another Belgrade weekly. "According to the security system, they cannot get Mladic. I hope this will not happen."

By "they" he meant the NATO-led Stabilisation Force (SFOR), which Wednesday snatched two Serbs wanted by the ICTY in connection with the Omarska concentration camp near Prijedor, northwest Bosnia, where Muslims were locked up, raped, beaten and killed in the war's early months.

In international eyes, Mr. Mladic's greatest crime would be the July 1995 capture of the isolated U.N.-declared "safe area" of Srebrenica and the ensuing slaughter of its menfolk —

Europe's worst atrocity since World War II.

But Mr. Mladic might prefer to cast himself as a tragic hero.

He was two years old when his father, a Communist partisan, was killed in 1945 in combat against the Nazi-backed Croat fascists, the Ustashi.

The boy grew up to be a senior officer in the Yugoslav army, loyal to Marshal Josip Tito's independent brand of communism, until the breakup of Yugoslavia in the early 1990s sent him back to his roots and to headline Serb nationalism.

He popped up everywhere during the war that killed an estimated 200,000 people, regularly swigging high-proof "rakija" (brandy) with

U.N. peacekeepers, whose mission he routinely mocked.

Mr. Mladic's mother died early in the war in a mortar attack outside Sarajevo. Later his daughter, a medical student, killed herself, aged 23.

Mr. Mladic was also a master at brinkmanship and at one point had gathered so much influence inside the Serb leadership that after Mr. Karadzic dismissed him in August 1995, he was soon forced to reinstate him.

But such clout seems to be a thing of the past. "He has been isolated," a diplomat said, and no longer has even the lingering support among Serbs that Mr. Karadzic might still enjoy.

World News

U.N. envoy asks neighbours to imp

arms embargo on

ISLAMABAD (AFP) — U.N.

special envoy to Afghanistan,

Abdullah Brahimi, said Friday

the Afghan conflict would end

if the warring factions agreed

to a ceasefire.

Mr. Brahimi said that

Afghanistan's neighbours have

every very big responsibility

in ending the Afghan conflict

and "must continue to work

together to bring about a

lasting peace in the

land and an end to the

violence."

The Algerian diplomat, who

also talks with Pakistani

officials, said the UN

will continue to work

to bring about a

lasting peace in the

land and an end to the

violence."

Mr. Brahimi said the UN

will continue to work

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## U.N. envoy asks neighbours to implement arms embargo on Afghanistan

ISLAMABAD (AFP) — U.N. special envoy to Afghanistan, Lakhdar Brahimi, said Friday the Afghan conflict would end if its neighbours agreed to stop arming their warring factions.

Mr. Brahimi said that Afghanistan's neighbours have a "very, very big responsibility" in ending the Afghan conflict, and "arms cannot go into Afghanistan except through the land and air space of these countries."

The Algerian diplomat, who held talks with Pakistani officials in Islamabad and the religious Taliban militia leaders in Kabul, is leaving for Tehran Saturday for discussions aimed at restoring peace in Afghanistan.

Mr. Brahimi said the United Nations was also in close contact with U.S. envoy Bill Richardson, who is to visit Kabul on April 17.

"There is very close coordination and cooperation between the United Nations and the countries that are interested in Afghanistan and definitely the United States is one of them," he said.

U.S. officials said Washington was promoting a formula agreed at the United Nations last month by Afghanistan's six neighbours plus the United States and Russia, providing for a broad-based government and respect for human rights.

Mr. Brahimi said the United Nations had been telling the neighbouring states that "if you want an arms embargo, you have got to talk to one another and agree on how to cooperate to make it work."

Without such cooperation, the calls for an arms embargo would be nothing more than slogans, he said, arguing that the Afghans would move towards peace if the flow of arms was stopped.

Mr. Brahimi specifically mentioned Iran and Pakistan as "very important" neighbours, having "close connections" with rival groups. "They are not hiding their interest in Afghanistan," he said.

The two countries can play an important role in this matter, he said.

Top leaders of the two countries discussed "very seriously" the Afghan issue during an Islamic summit in Tehran in December, which led to an agreement among the warring groups to initiate dialogue.

The U.N. envoy hoped a proposed steering committee comprising representatives of the Taliban militia and their rival northern alliance would meet in Islamabad next week to bring an end to the Afghan war.

The committee will work for convening a meeting of Ulama (Muslim clerics) from both sides to discuss ways to end the bloodshed.

Mr. Brahimi said he was optimistic the Ulama commission would take practical steps for a ceasefire and an embargo on arms to warring groups.

He said it was agreed the conflict had lingered "too long," and the countries of the region should understand its negative effects abroad.

Donor countries are unhappy as aid cannot be distributed without proper security, Mr. Brahimi said, stressing that peace in Afghanistan would open the way for oil, gas and energy projects and create thousands of jobs.

But if the war continued, there was danger of its spilling over, he said.

Mr. Brahimi said he discussed with Taliban ruling council chief Mullah Muhammad Rabbani the difficulties faced by U.N. aid workers in the two-thirds of Afghanistan under Taliban control.

"Some organisations are thinking of closing their shops," he said, adding that Mullah Rabbani understood it was the Taliban's duty to help U.N. agencies carry out their humanitarian work.

But Mr. Brahimi said problems are more serious in the northern region held by the opposition. The United Nations had been forced to close its offices in Mazar-i-Sharif because "we are having very serious security problem in the north" of the country.

He said a U.N. delegation would visit Kabul soon to further discuss the issue with Taliban officials.



Opposition leader Benazir Bhutto leaves Sind provincial high court after appearing before a special accountability court on charges of illegal recruitments in various organisations during her regime. The court allowed her today to go abroad. Her government was dismissed in 1996 by the then president Farooq Laghari on corruption charges (Reuters photo)

## Pakistani court exempts Bhutto from appearing in graft case

KARACHI (AFP) — A Pakistani court Friday exempted former Premier Benazir Bhutto from attending court in person in a case of administrative corruption against her, officials said.

Ms. Bhutto, who appeared in response to an earlier arrest warrant, pleaded that she wanted to go abroad to consult lawyers and to deliver lectures in the United States and Canada.

Accepting her plea, Justice Ghous Mubammad of the Sindh High Court observed: "Every accused has a right to consult lawyer, therefore this right is granted."

The hearing of the case was fixed for April 24. But it will be delayed until her return on May 9.

Ms. Bhutto, 44, arrived at the court with party colleagues amid tight security and slogan-shouting by her supporters.

The court last month summoned her in a case filed by a government-appointed Accountability Commissioner.

The former premier along with ex-officials of national carrier Pakistan International Airlines were blamed for bypassing rules in postings and recruitments in the airline.

Ms. Bhutto was sacked in November 1996, charged with misrule and corruption during her three years at the helm. She has denied the charges, calling it an act of political victimisation.

"This is no crime to provide employment to unemployed youths. They were not known to me," she said.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has also given jobs to his "cronies," she alleged, while tailing to reporters.

"They have involved me in this case because they do not want me to defend myself and my husband in European countries," Ms. Bhutto's husband Asif Ali Zardari, who was minister for investment in her cabinet, is in jail facing several criminal cases.

"They do not want to give my right to unfettered defence and to express my political views freely," the opposition leader said.

The government said Ms. Bhutto's bank accounts in Europe had been frozen as the money was allegedly looted by her family members during her rule.

Ms. Bhutto is to leave for London soon to "consult" lawyers before going on a lecture tour of the United States and Canada.

## Amnesty ruled out over 1989 Ceausescu clampdown

BUCHAREST (AFP) — Romanian President Emil Constantinescu ruled out Friday an amnesty for those who brutally clamped down on protesters against Nicolae Ceausescu in December 1989, saying they would face trial.

"I cannot conceive of an amnesty for acts which are crimes against humanity," he said, referring to those who put down protests which swept the country in the weeks before Ceausescu's death on Christmas Day that year.

His comment came after Defence Minister Duda Ionescu proposed an amnesty for military leaders implicated in the clampdown, sparking protests by rights groups.

Some 1,100 people were killed and thousands injured during the uprising, which climaxed in the fall of the Romanian dictator amid the collapse of Communist regimes across central and Eastern Europe.

Mr. Constantinescu did not rule out however "a collective pardon or an amnesty" — but only after those who implicated had been tried and convicted or otherwise.

Since his election in November 1996, 16 cases involving military leaders accused over their role in the clampdown have come to court, he said.

The most high-profile trial, which has just started in Bucharest, is that of generals Victor Stanculescu and Mihai Chiriac, accused of clamping down on protesters in Timisoara, the cradle of the country's revolution.

After 1989 the pair were hailed as heroes and joined the first post-Ceausescu government as defence and interior minister respectively, before allegations about their actions came to light.

"Whoever the people or the institutions implicated, the truth must be known," Mr. Constantinescu said.

## Indonesians make bid for asylum at embassies in Malaysia

KUALA LUMPUR (AFP) — A rag-tag group of 35 Indonesian immigrants broke into the U.S. embassy and three other diplomatic compounds here Friday in a desperate bid to seek political asylum, officials said.

But most of the frail, poorly-dressed immigrants from Indonesia's troubled Aceh province were swiftly rounded up and handed over to Malaysian security forces.

It was thought the event had been coordinated with the help of people sympathetic to the group's plight, although police could not give details.

Eight who scaled a two-metre wall to get into the U.S. mission were detained by the embassy security and were "being interrogated by our political section," a U.S. official told AFP.

But 20 Acehnese who burst into the French and Swiss embassies and seven others who entered the nearby Sharif Ali Palace, a rest house for senior Brunei officers, were arrested by Malaysian police.

A French source said Malaysian security forces were asked to enter the diplomatic grounds and arrest the asylum seekers after four dashed through the gates, and four others jumped over the compound's walls.

"About 40 personnel from the Federal Reserve Unit entered the compound and detained them. There were some scuffles initially but the illegals gave in," he said.

"They were dressed in clothes akin to a construction worker. They looked weak and their frail bodies were no match to put up any resistance when the police came in to arrest the illegals in the French embassy," another French source said.

One of the group had lifted a stone to prevent arrest but gave up while the rest could only just "stare into the eyes of the riot police who were armed with batons."

Bernama news agency quoted Bakri Zinin, Cheras police chief, as saying the Swiss and the Brunei embassy officials had also requested police assistance to evict the illegals.

Acehnese immigrants have been fighting their deportation back to Indonesia, as part of a crackdown by Malaysian authorities, arguing they face reprisals if they return.

But the Indonesian military has denied the claims, even though 500 were held for questioning after being deported for interrogation about their links to an outlawed Aceh separatist group.

The U.S. spokeswoman said the embassy was in contact with officials of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) here.

"They are seeking asylum status. The embassy is working with the UNHCR to verify their positions," she said. "We will not hand them to the police ... not yet."

The eight were being given food by the U.S. embassy, and one who had head wounds was being treated by medical staff, adding the embassy was closed to normal activities.

An AFP photographer at the U.S. embassy said about 50 riot police who had earlier secured the perimeter wall of the embassy had been withdrawn.

But there were protests that other embassies had turned over the asylum-seekers.

One Western diplomat, expressing disgust at the move, said it appeared the illegals were desperate to avoid deportation.

"The bottom-line for us is if somebody comes in and asks for asylum, we have to look into their case. We certainly won't evict them," the diplomat said.

They must be desperate. Their action to break into a foreign embassy is an abnormal action. It is an act of someone who is desperate," he said.

Malaysia, which has deported thousands of illegal immigrants, has been criticised by human rights groups for not discriminating between economic and political migrants.

Aceh separatists have been fighting a low-level insurgency for independence from Indonesia in the devoutly Muslim region since the mid-1970s.

Fourteen illegal Indonesians have been holed up at the UNHCR office seeking political asylum since March 30, when they crashed a truck through the compound gates.

They were among 247 inmates who escaped from the Lenggeng camp in Negeri Sembilan following bloody riots as they resisted deportation. It was not immediately known if Friday's group were from those who had managed to evade arrest.

Malaysian authorities have insisted the groups are economic migrants fleeing Indonesia's financial turmoil and not political refugees.

## Bavarian premier challenges foreign ministry role on Europe

BONN (AFP) — The head of the Bavarian government, Edmund Stoiber, has called for Germany's European policy to be removed from the mandate of the foreign ministry.

In an interview in the latest edition of the weekly magazine Focus, to appear Saturday, Mr. Stoiber contended that Europe had become an internal political issue.

"European policy no longer has anything to do with foreign affairs," said Mr. Stoiber, who belongs to the Bavarian-based Christian Social Union (CSU) — sister party to Chancellor Helmut Kohl's Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and an ally in the centre-right government.

Mr. Stoiber said the foreign ministry — headed by Klaus Kinkel — was failing to defend German domestic interests in negotiations on Europe.

Mr. Kinkel belongs to the Free Democratic Party (FDP), the smallest member of the three-party ruling coalition.

Complaining that between 50 and 70 per cent of domestic policy decisions were now being made in Brussels, Mr. Stoiber called for the creation of a special European ministry, which would be "directly answerable to the chancellor."

His remarks echoed those of Mr. Kohl, who in the previous edition of Focus had voiced annoyance at what he described as interference from Brussels in issues that could be better handled locally.

Mr. Stoiber's thinly-veiled sniping at Mr. Kinkel comes amid a general jockeying for position by German political parties prior to legislative elections in September.

The opposition Social-Democratic Party (SPD) is currently leading the opinion polls, but party chief Oskar Lafontaine warned against complacency in another interview to appear Saturday.

Mr. Lafontaine recalled that the SPD had been riding similarly high in the polls when it lost elections in 1994.

## Veteran negotiator to lead North Korean team to inter-Korean talks

BEIJING (AFP) — Veteran negotiator Jon Kum-Cbol will lead the North Korean delegation to landmark inter-Korean talks in the Chinese capital this weekend, a spokesman said here Friday.

"The North informed us today that Jon will head a 5-member delegation to the deputy ministerial talks here," the South Korean spokesman told AFP.

"The North also suggested that the meeting take place at 3 p.m. (0700 GMT) instead of the previously set 10 a.m. (0200 GMT) Saturday," he said.

North Koreans did not give any reasons for the delay. Mr. Jon, a senior administrator who has long been in charge of inter-Korean dialogue, led the successful 1995 talks with the South, which resulted in the South's supply of 150,000 tonnes of free rice to the North.

After three years and nine months of hiatus, Pyongyang proposed the government-to-government talks last week to discuss the South's supply of fertiliser to the famine-stricken North and "other matters of mutual concern."

Mr. Jon's counterpart, deputy Unification Minister Jeong Se-Hyun, said top priority at the talks would be to try and arrange contact and reunions with tens of thousands of South Koreans cut-off for almost half a century from their loved ones in the reclusive North.

He also bled out the hope that the meeting could lead to a continuing round of government-to-government talks, though he predicted the first round would not produce much, and not go beyond Tuesday at the latest.

After a historic summit between the two Koreas fell through after the sudden death of North Korean President Kim Il-Sung, Pyongyang has refused government-level talks with Seoul, using the Red Cross channel to obtain food aid from the South.

The North's proposal for the resumption of official talks came less than two months after South Korea's new President Kim Dae Jung took office.



Residents of Concord, Alabama, look for personal belongings after a tornado struck killing at least thirty-seven people in Alabama and Georgia. The devastating storm that struck Alabama, Georgia and Mississippi are the latest in what has become the deadliest U.S. tornado season in 14 years (Reuters photo)

## U.S. tornado death toll rises to 43

WASHINGTON (AFP) — At least 43 people were killed and more than 200 were injured in tornadoes that ripped through Alabama, Mississippi and Georgia, authorities said.

The twisters hit between late Thursday and early Friday, killing 32 people in Alabama, 10 in Georgia and one in Mississippi. Some 2,000 homes and businesses were damaged or destroyed.

Experts estimated that one tornado that left a 32 kilometre path of destruction near Birmingham, Alabama, registered the highest level, F5, on the so-called Fujita scale. This means it developed winds of over 416 kilometres per hour.

Alabama Governor Fob James said the tornadoes were the worst ever to hit the state.

Rescue crews were combing through rubble Friday in search of victims.

Vice President Al Gore and Federal Emergency Management Administration chief James Lee Witt were expected to visit the areas of devastation in Alabama and Georgia later Friday.

President Bill Clinton Thursday announced disaster relief for the hardest-hit areas.

"You can see how awful it has been," Mr. Clinton said of the television footage showing the destruction. "It's quite amazing. I hope you will all say a prayer for those folks tonight."

"It's a tragedy of tragedies," he said.

## 350 new biotech drugs in development

WASHINGTON (R) — More than 300 different biotechnology medicines are in development, including vaccines against cancer and drugs to treat a whole range of diseases, U.S. drugmakers said Friday.

Nearly half the drugs in development, 151 out of 350, are meant to fight cancer, the annual report by Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA) found.

It said 140 different pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies were working on the drugs.

"This is a whole new era that we are moving into and people aren't even noticing," Dr. John Siegfried, deputy vice president for science and regulatory affairs at PhRMA said in a telephone interview.

"It's an incredibly exciting time to see disease begin to be attacked at the genetic level, at the chromosome level. My God, when I started to practice, that was unheard of. It was Buck Rogers stuff, and now it's happening."

Biotechnology medicines in development include a flu vaccine being developed by Protein Sciences of Menlo Park, California, Chiron Corp's protein skin cancer drug and Biogen Inc's cancer vaccine.

Protein, already licensed for treating renal cell cancer that has spread throughout the body, is a genetically engineered version of interleukin-2 (IL-2), a naturally occurring immune system signalling chemical.

It stimulates the body to destroy abnormal cancer cells.

Biogen's vaccine alerts the body's immune system to the presence of muc-1, a protein found on the surface of 90 per cent of common solid tumours including breast, ovarian and lung cancer.

It is being tested in non-small cell lung cancer, of which there are an estimated 149,000 new cases in North America each year, killing 133,000 people.

"We used to think that vaccines were only for diphtheria, pertussis for kids. And all of a sudden you have tonnes of vaccines for cancer, as a preventative in AIDS," said Dr. Siegfried.

The whole point of biotechnology is to tweak the body's own defences, Dr. Siegfried said.

"If you look at it historically, that's really what the body's been doing all along anyway," he said.

The road ahead is not all rosy, PhRMA warns. For instance, patent battles loom, such as a fight over who owns the rights to the breast and breast cancer genes and a lawsuit over genetically altered seeds that Mycogen Plant Sciences lost against Monsanto in February.

"Patent protection is really the basis of our industry and my guess is if there is a conflict in patents, which is almost inevitable in the genetic business, they are going to be very hard fought," Dr. Siegfried said.

There were also ethical issues, he said.

"The whole concept of messing around with genes — people may say 'I don't want to do it but if you tell me that messing around with my genes will save my son then I am going to want to do it,'" he said.

There were plenty of new targets to choose from, the report, which lists all 350 new medicines, said. With an estimated 100,000 genes in the human body, and new ones being mapped daily, companies had their work laid out.

"The modern tools of biotechnology, coupled with computer technology's ability to analyse massive amounts of data quickly — help scientists determine which genes or proteins are defective," it said.

"We can accomplish in the lab now in a couple of hours what used to take a year," Dr. Siegfried said.



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## Only way out

THE RISING tension between the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) and Hamas over the responsibility for the killing of Hamas activist Mohieddin Al Sharif last week threatens to engulf the Palestinian people in a fratricidal conflict unless it is swiftly contained and redressed. When Al Sharif was killed a few days ago in Ramallah under mysterious circumstances, the general assumption then was that Israeli secret agents were behind the murder, since Al Sharif was a prime target of Israel for his alleged involvement in the string of suicide bombings in several Israeli localities. The case against Israel seemed overwhelming at that time until PNA investigations into the case revealed that Hamas militants and not Israel were behind the killing.

The PNA based its case against Hamas on "confessions" by the Hamas militants who allegedly took part in the execution of Al Sharif. Hamas maintains that the confessions were extracted by force, therefore proving nothing, and accuses the PNA of complicity in the cover-up of the liquidation of one of its leaders. The conflict between PNA and Hamas escalated when Hamas leader in Gaza Abdul Aziz Al Rantissi was detained by PNA police for his accusations that the PNA conducted a foul investigation.

It seems that under the prevailing circumstances and the cycle of recriminations, the most effective way to end this tug-of-war between Hamas and the PNA is to establish the truth about the slaying of Al Sharif. The facts surrounding the killing cannot be established under the current conditions by either Hamas or the PNA police to the satisfaction of the Palestinian people. The PNA police has a poor record when it comes to the observance of basic human rights standards during the interrogation of Palestinian suspects. Hamas, on the other hand, has a vested interest in denying any involvement in the killing. Under the circumstances we suggest the creation of an independent judicial tribunal, composed of Palestinian jurists who are well-known for their integrity and sound judgement, to investigate the killing. This would be the only sensible way out of the existing cycle of accusations and counteraccusations. The Palestinian people deserve to know the truth through a procedure that is immune from any tainted positions.

## ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I'S Sultan Hattab criticised the U.S. for failing to announce its own initiative and declaring its demand for an Israeli withdrawal from 13.1 per cent of the occupied Arab territories in Palestine. Hattab said this attitude is designed to exert further pressure on the Palestine authority to force it to succumb to the wishes and desires of the Jewish state. The U.S. administration realises that it is Israel which refuses to implement the Oslo accords and that it is creating tension that can lead to violence, but Washington is still unwilling to openly declare its initiative despite the risk of a new wave of violence in the occupied territories, said the writer. As for the Europeans, he said, they are satisfied with lip service to the Arabs and the Palestinians and with issuing statements calling on Israel to comply with the requirements of peace but without any practical step to force Netanyahu to respond to reason. While the Palestinians are facing this dilemma and their leaders are gradually forced to succumb to Israel's desires, the Arab countries continue to show their impotence even in calling for a summit meeting, seen as urgent in light of the prevailing situation and for which Arafat has called when he attended the Arab foreign ministers meeting in Cairo last week, said the writer. He said if the present situation persists, the Palestinians could resort to desperate actions which could then force the world community, including the U.S., to step in and take stands long overdue.

A WRITER for the weekly Al Majd expressed the view that the Islamic resistance group Hamas currently faces a dilemma and seems unable to achieve any successes despite recent statements by its leaders to pursue the struggle against Israel. Saleh Barghouti said that if the death of Mohieddin Sharif came at the hands of the Israelis then Hamas has to act promptly to retain its credibility. But he cautioned against killing innocent civilians, something that might draw highly adverse consequences for the Palestinians as a whole. The writer said Hamas should repay Israel in its own coin and pick out Zionist leaders as their next targets rather than seek revenge on ordinary citizens. The writer said if Sharif was killed by elements of his own group then Hamas is in deep trouble because the killing demonstrates the splits among its leaders. In any case, added the writer, Hamas can not remain silent for long, otherwise it risks losing credibility at home and abroad and this could encourage the Israelis to pursue their present policies against the Palestinian people.

## Jordanian Perspective

## Arab Israelis have a choice; it is the political option

By Dr. Musa Keilani

THE RECENT clashes between Arab Israelis and Israeli security forces and the subsequent commercial strike staged in northern Galilee were no accidents in time; they were some of the manifestations of Arab anger against a systematic Israeli policy of discrimination and denial of rights against Arabs who chose not to flee their land despite persistent Israeli terror campaigns in 1948 and thereafter.

By design or coincidence, it should be noted, that the confrontation in northern Galilee took place as the 50th anniversary of the Deir Yassin massacre is marked — an atrocity etched into Arab memory as a vivid example of Israeli brutality against Arabs and the actions designed to evict as many Arabs as possible from the "promised land." Earlier, Arab Israelis and the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza also observed "Land Day," another recollection of Israeli killings of Arabs, another connection with Arab land that the Jewish state wanted to usurp and ultimately did.

That history was reenacted in northern Galilee last week when a big contingent of security forces descended on an Arab village to quash protests sparked by the demolition of Arab homes, which, the government contended, were built illegally. The Israeli forces used brutal methods to put down the protests, including tear-gas and live fire.

But the interesting aspect was that the protesters fought back with stones and whatever they could lay their hands on, short of firearms.

It was as if the Arab Israeli community was launching its own intifada against injustice and discrimination.

As far as laws and regulations go, the move to crack down on "illegal" buildings cannot be questioned because it is an issue of enforcing the state's legislation. But the Israeli action against the mostly bedouin residents of the small village of Um Al Sahal in northern Galilee has to be seen against the backdrop of the systematic discrimination that the Arab community has been subjected to since 1948; then the violent enforcement of

building codes that the security forces used against the protesters would be seen in a totally different light and definitely as part of a new version of apartheid.

Indeed, it reeks of a psyche to treat the Arab Israeli community as third-class citizens (Europeans being first and Orientals being second) particularly when seen in the additional light of the disproportionate representation in parliament granted to the nearly million-strong Arab Israelis.

**Blanket refusals for building permits for Arabs, whether in "Israel proper" or the Palestinian territories Israel occupied in the 1967 war, has been a hallmark Israeli policy towards the Arab community which lives under its control.**

One of the announced policy platforms of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, during the 1996 elections in which he won with a razor-thin majority, was an open admission that the Arab community of Israel was not "treated right" and that he, if elected, would seek to set things right. While we do not expect Netanyahu to keep his promises, (we have to come to know him better than that), his very affirmation that Arab Israelis deserved better treatment reflects the reality that there had always been a discriminatory policy adopted by all successive Israeli governments.

Blanket refusals for building permits for Arabs,

whether in "Israel proper" or the Palestinian territories Israel occupied in the 1967 war, has been a hallmark Israeli policy towards the Arab community which lives under its control. But that is only one aspect of the step-mother attitude Israel has adopted.

The development of power, water, health and education infrastructure in Arab villages and towns has always been way down on the Israeli list of priorities, and Arab municipalities have been struggling to survive under the pressure of the Israeli policy. The natural growth of Arab communities has always been at a snail's pace compared to their Israeli counterparts, but the pace of civic services to the Arabs has been much slower, if at all.

Little regard was ever given to the status of the Arab community as a legitimate, tax-paying entity of the State of Israel. As Arab Israelis, these "citizens" have a right to demand equal treatment as any other citizen of the state, which became their de facto country by virtue of imposition. Obviously, Israel's take-it-or-leave-it approach is but the other side of the coin — Israel's mode towards Arab Israelis is no different than its way of dealing with the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza. But the Arab Israelis do have a choice — they can exercise their voting rights in determining that the right representatives are sent to the Knesset.

Still, a unified political platform has always been elusive among Arab Israelis, a fact that serves the objectives of Israeli politicians who have little interest, if any, in granting Arab Israelis their legitimate rights as citizens of Israel.

As such, while the Arab Israelis have all our sympathies, we need to tell them in absolute terms that they do have political options if they choose to exercise them through a unified strategy, which, by extension, would also be applied in the broader context of Arab-Israeli coexistence on the basis of respect for each other and non-interference in the internal affairs of the other. But then, the absence of unity, let alone unified strategies, has always been a curse of the Arab World.

## Hizbollah's busy domestic agenda

By Uri Dromi

TEL AVIV — For more than a decade, the official Israeli line has been that if Israel were to withdraw from the "security zone" it established in 1985 in a swath of Lebanese land along Israel's northern border, Hizbollah would launch attacks on Israeli kibbutzim and towns.

Now, however, Israel proposes to withdraw and is seeking guarantees from the Lebanese government that it will stop Hizbollah attacks in exchange.

In the last year, Israel has sustained the deadliest stretch of fighting since 1985 with Hizbollah, and more and more Israelis now question the value of the security zone.

**While competing groups in Lebanon now stand shoulder to shoulder in the fight against Israel, there is evidence that when Israel is no longer in the south they will turn on each other.**

It is a sharp turnaround, but one that makes sense. An analysis of the forces driving the region reveals that the traditional beliefs may be off-base and that Israel may well be able to withdraw without substantial danger to its northern residents.

Why? Because despite Hizbollah rhetoric that it would continue attacking

Israel if Israeli troops left Lebanon, the group's attention would likely be diverted to the extremely messy internal Lebanese arena.

While competing groups in Lebanon

It is thus reasonable to suggest that what Israeli military leaders believe would happen in Lebanon after an Israeli withdrawal may not be accurate.

Professor Emanuel Sivan of the

**It is likely that Hizbollah will decide that gaining power in Lebanon, its base, must take precedence over fighting an enemy that has retreated behind its own borders.**

now stand shoulder to shoulder in the fight against Israel, there is evidence that when Israel is no longer in the south they will turn on each other.

To be sure, the 1985 Hizbollah platform lists the liberation of Lebanon from the Zionist occupation as only a stage in the struggle to liberate Jerusalem and destroy Israel. And Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah, Hizbollah's secretary-general, said recently that Israel should not expect calm even if it leaves Lebanon. But in the last 30 years, Israel's record of understanding the Arabs leaves much to be desired. Israel did not anticipate the 1973 Yom Kippur War; Anwar Sadat's peace initiative in 1977 was perceived by some in Israel as a hoax.

Then, in 1982, Israel blundered into an invasion of Lebanon. Its subsequent occupation stoked Shiite Muslim animosity against Israel, one factor in the creation of Hizbollah.

Israel also failed to anticipate the Palestinian intifada, and when it did it was slow to understand its full significance.

Hebrew University of Jerusalem, an authority on Islamic radicals, says that within these movements, internal struggle often takes precedence over the fight against Israel.

It is likely that Hizbollah will decide that gaining power in Lebanon, its base, must take precedence over fighting an enemy that has retreated behind its own borders.

Hizbollah has many enemies among Lebanon's Christians and Sunni Muslims. Even with Amal, the main Shiite Muslim organisation in Lebanon, there is bad blood. Furthermore, an Israeli withdrawal would probably force Syria's Hafez Assad — the main power broker in Lebanon, with 35,000 troops there — to allow the Lebanese government to assume control of southern Lebanon. Such a shift in the power structure in the south would force Hizbollah to put resources into maintaining its position.

Hizbollah was formed to help the oppressed Shiite in Lebanon, which is why Iran's Shiite leadership provides millions of dollars to the organisation.

funnelled through Syria.

The organisation developed a military capability because no group in Lebanon can advance its interests without one, but it also devoted resources to building a social service network to help poor Shiites.

By invading Lebanon in 1982, Israel gave Hizbollah an external target. An Israeli withdrawal may result in Hizbollah's turning its attention to its original goals of improving the lot of Shiites in Lebanon and trying to impose an Islamic regime on that country.

Sheikh Mohammed Hussein Fadlallah, Hizbollah's spiritual leader, has demonstrated that assuming power in Lebanon is important to him. In spite of his previous ruling that Islam and democracy cannot be reconciled, he allowed Hizbollah to participate in the 1992 parliamentary elections. All eight Hizbollah candidates were elected to parliament, becoming the largest single bloc.

Will taking part in the political game moderate Hizbollah? It's hard to say. But there is no question that politics will keep Hizbollah busy. Turning Lebanon, a corrupt, bourgeois, Westernised country, into an Islamic republic run by ayatollahs is an ambitious programme that could take years to realise. And maybe, instead of Lebanon's being "Hizbollahised," Hizbollah might be "Lebanonised."

The writer is a retired colonel in the Israeli Air Force and a former director of the Israeli government press office.

— International Herald Tribune

## Fingers point at Israel in latest Hamas assassination

REVIEWED BY  
 ELIA NASRALLAH

LOCAL COMMENTARIES last week covered repercussions of the assassination of Hamas leader Mohieddin Sharif, the question of Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon and Jordanian domestic affairs.

Al Arab Al Yawm's Taher Adwan pointed to a public opinion poll in Israel following the assassination of Mohieddin Sharif revealing that 76 per cent of the Israeli public supported the killing of Hamas leaders. Adwan said such attitudes reflect the true nature of the Israeli society which is oriented towards annihilating the Palestinian people and their leaders. The result of this survey demonstrates that the Israeli society, which is led by an extremist party, the Likud, is leading this region towards further cycles of violence and bloodshed, he said. The writer said the Arabs, the Palestinians in particular, have offered the Israelis numerous compromises for the sake of arriving at a just and durable peace but

it seems that these compromises have given Israel encouragement to pursue its atrocities which were quite conspicuous in the past two years.

Al Aswaq's Rashid Hassan accused Israel of assassinating Sharif either directly through its own intelligence services or through agents planted in the self rule areas of Palestine. Israel is the prime beneficiary of the death of Hamas leaders who the Jewish state and its intelligence services have been chasing for the past three years, said the writer. The fact that a wave of delight swept over the Israeli leaders is evidence that the Israelis were behind the assassination, added the writer. He said that by killing Sharif the Israelis have created once again differences between Hamas and the Palestinian National Authority and sown seeds of dissent and conflict between the two sides at a time when they were close to joining forces against Israel in view of its intransigent position concerning the withdrawal from the occupied Palestinian lands.

Al Dusiour's Nawaf Zaru described Israel's assassination of

the Hamas leader as clearly demonstrating the Jewish state's organised terrorism against the Palestinians. He said the killing is an embodiment of Israeli Minister Ariel Sharon's threats to liquidate

## THE WEEK IN PRINT

Hamas leaders anywhere in the world. The Arabs and the Palestinians, said the writer, are facing a state ruled by terrorists bent on exterminating people struggling for their freedom and employing all forms of terror to intimidate the Palestinian leadership and the Palestinian people. Being a state oriented towards and bent on committing terrorism Israel can by no means be sincere in its claims about seeking peace with the Arab countries and in the light of its actions and its continuous violations of peace accords it has proved beyond doubt that it is still obsessed by the Zionist dogma of building an empire at

the expense of peace and the rights of other nations.

Al Ra'i's Tareq Masarweb scoffed at Israel's bid to withdraw from southern Lebanon saying that the conditions placed on the offer makes it clear that the Jewish state is floating the idea for mere propaganda purposes against Syria and Lebanon accusing them of being anti-peace. The writer said Israel simply wants Lebanon to guarantee the Israeli people's security on the northern front and liquidate the resistance. Furthermore the Israelis aim at creating trouble between Lebanon and Syria and achieving a separate treaty with Beirut which has been closely coordinating its position with Damascus. The Lebanese government together with the resistance have exposed Israel's manoeuvres and rejected the conditional withdrawal bid demanding that Israel implement U.N. Security Council Resolution 425, noted the writer. He said that by offering conditional withdrawals, the Israelis are providing evidence that they do not respect the requirements of durable peace.

Saleh Qallab, a writer for Al Arab Al Yawm addressed the murders of prominent Jordanian lawyer Hanna Naddah, his son and a doctor saying that the killings, together with the recent series of crimes committed in the Kingdom lately, bear the signs of organised crime. The state of crimes in Jordan committed over the past two years, such as those that took place in Irbid, Mafraq and Amman, indicate that the Jordanian society, long known for its secure and safe environment, is beginning to witness actions alien to its nature, said the writer. He said the rapid and sudden population growth, the return of expatriates in great numbers, the improvement in the standard of living, the openness of the Jordanian society and unemployment are among the main factors creating a climate for crime. The writer wondered why some of the most brutal crimes like those committed in Rabieh and Jabal Hussein districts have not yet been resolved. He said such incidences indicate that Jordanian society is witnessing clear signs of organised criminal activity.

Features  
 Music  
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By Hind-Lara Mange  
 Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — In the past few years, the importance of the role of the international community in the peace process has been highlighted. The book "The Role of the International Community in the Peace Process" by Hind-Lara Mange, published by the Jordan Press Foundation, is a valuable contribution to the understanding of the role of the international community in the peace process. The book is a collection of essays by leading experts in the field, and it provides a comprehensive overview of the role of the international community in the peace process. The book is a must-read for anyone interested in the peace process.

"This is urgent when a country suffers ethnic mass and are b apart." sta

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1997 HEAD  
 By Stanley B. W.

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# Music goes to war in a plea for humanity

By Hind-Lara Mango  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — In order to raise more awareness of the plight of civilians trapped in the conflicts in Africa the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) initiated a book entitled *Woza Africa!* Music goes to war, published at the end of 1997.

The book is a plea for the closer observance of international humanitarian law. Thousands of copies are being distributed by the ICRC to all civilian and military authorities on the African continent.

The book illustrates the plight of victims of civil war in various parts of Africa, through pictures taken by renowned photographers.

In introducing *Woza Africa*, South African President Nelson Mandela writes in the foreword that among the challenges faced by the African continent today is "...giving free reign to their people's intellectual, cultural, economic and political enterprise."

President Mandela, who spent 22 years in Robben Island Prison and was visited by the ICRC, stressed the importance of "creating an environment in which democracy, tolerance, human rights and justice find expression under the African sun."

*Woza Africa* is a continuation of the "So Why?" campaign, launched in Africa in October last year. This campaign entailed the production of

an album, book, and television documentary.

The album is the culmination of the efforts of six of the continent's most popular artists who went on a trip to the worst-affected regions in Africa with ICRC representatives. The artists met with war victims in Natal, Liberia, southern Sudan and Angola.

Consequently, the title song expresses the emotion they felt after meeting these war victims. The aim of the campaign was combating ethnic discrimination in Africa and promoting the respect for victims of war and political violence.

"This is urgent at a time when a number of countries are in the throes of war, suffering from 'ethnic cleansing,' mass deportation and when countless families are being torn apart." — mission statement

The album has been aired over more than 90 African and international radio stations, including the BBC World Service, Radio France International, and Voice of America. It will be aired on Radio Jordan's English Service in May to commemorate the International Day for the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

# WOZA AFRICA!

Music goes to War



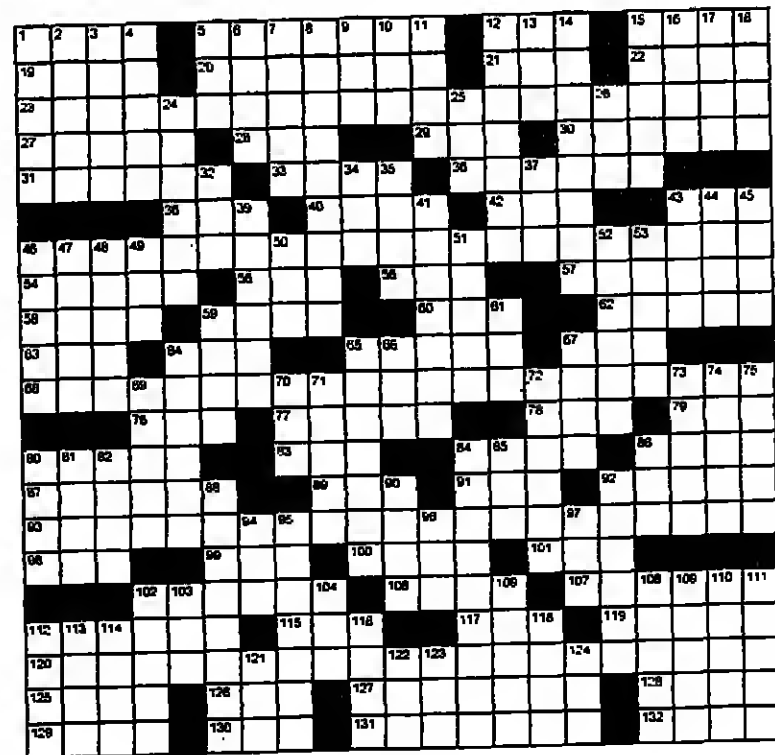
Foreword by Nelson Mandela

## The Saturday Crossword

### 1997 HEADLINES

By Stanley B. Whitten, Northbrook, Illinois

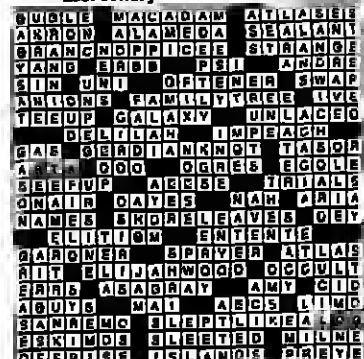
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  - 17 Barrel
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- 65 Down on the market?
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- 68 Ascend
- 70 Sphero
- 71 Neadace units
- 72 Timing signal
- 73 Excuse
- 74 Long gun
- 75 Cattle
- 80 Monumental entrance
- 81 Little legumes
- 82 Grel or Moss
- 84 California Island
- 85 Strange
- 86 Conifer
- 88 Tax-time documentation
- 90 Blunder
- 92 South China Sea sultanate
- 94 Unweaker's cry
- 95 Baby cells
- 96 Employ
- 97 Serve perfectly

### Last Sunday's Crossword Solved



## Israeli Arabs march home, to a place they can't live in

By Serge Schmemann

SHEIKH DANNUN, Israel — Viewed from a distance through the thick haze of a sandstorm, the marchers with their upheld sheets of red and green paper seemed to merge with the flowering fields of the Galilee.

As they approached, their chants became audible: "The Right of Return Is Inalienable!" "Land Day Lives On!" And it became evident that each sheet of paper carried Arabic lettering. There were 418 sheets, a marcher said, one for each Arab village that stood among these and similar fields 50 years ago, before being levelled by the Jewish soldiers of the new State of Israel.

About the time of the march, Palestinians protesting the presence of Jewish settlers near Nablus, in the Samaritan hills of the West Bank, clashed with Israeli police officers, who opened fire with rubber-coated bullets.

The thousand Arabs walking out of Sheikh Dannun were not West Bank Palestinians, for whom the Israeli settlers and soldiers were occupiers and interlopers. The marchers were Israeli citizens, most fluent in Hebrew, and they marched with a permit from police, who were mainly there to handle traffic.

Yet their red, green, black and white flags were also Palestinian, although their grievance differed largely in its vintage from those of West Bank Palestinians.

The march was called to mark what the Israeli Arabs call Land Day. March 30, the anniversary of the day 22 years ago when Israeli forces opened fire on Israeli Arabs protesting the expropriation of their lands, killing six.

This year, the 50th anniversary of the founding of the State of Israel, the commemoration had a special significance: to begin events to mark Al Nakbeh, or the Disaster — the defeat and dispossession of the Palestinian Arabs in 1948. Israeli Arab leaders called for a general strike, and on May 15, major commemorations.

A few miles north of Sheikh Dannun, the column turned onto a dirt road that led through wheat fields

into a wood, with thick hedges of cactus among the pines. This was a sure sign that an Arab village had once stood here: the cactus fenced a corral. The ruin of a mosque, surrounded by a high fence topped with barbed wire, soon came into view, and the chants gave way to the Palestinian anthem, "Biladi, Biladi" — "My Country, My Country."

As the speeches began, Hamad Ali, a 62-year-old construction worker from Sheikh Dannun, walked to the edge of the crowd and pointed to a large tree among the weeds and hillocks.

"I was born here," he said in Hebrew. "My parents' house stood there, by the tree. The mosque was the centre. There was a bakery over here, two meat shops. My family lived off the land — they had some cows, sheep, grew some wheat."

The village was called Gabsiyeh, and it was apparently much like the other 900 villages in which the majority of Palestinian Arabs, then estimated to number 1.2 million, lived in 1948. About 700 people lived here.

Ali interrupted his story for a minute of silent prayer called for those killed during the 1948 civil war. "We ran away and hid in caves," he resumed. "We were afraid they'd kill us. I heard there was a young man who climbed on the mosque with a white flag to surrender, and they shot him."

True or not, there were many similar stories. But unlike tens of thousands of other Arabs, who fled into Arab-held territories to the north and east, the villagers of Gabsiyeh returned to their homes.

"The officers came back in 1951," Ali said. "It was winter. I remember because it was the first snow I ever saw. A few Jewish officers came. They said the army were going to hold manoeuvres, and it was safer for us to leave. My poor parents believed them and obeyed. Nobody was ever allowed back. Those who came back were arrested. I was 14."

The villagers appealed to the high court, which ordered the military administration to let them return. Instead the army levelled the village, leaving only the

mosque to crumble slowly among the cactuses.

Ali's story has countless echoes among the millions of Palestinian Arabs. Their continued existence as refugees in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and neighbouring Arab countries remains one of the major hurdles to a final peace settlement, and a troubling shadow over Israel to many of its citizens.

The people who marched Saturday are what the Israeli novelist David Grossman called present absentees — an ironic play on the fact that the Israeli government seized some Arab properties in the early years on the ground that their owners were absentee landlords.

According to Israeli statistics, about 136,000 Palestinian Arabs were left in Israel in November 1948. Their numbers have surpassed one million, almost a fifth of the population. They hold Israeli citizenship and elect representatives but do not serve in the army. They proportionately receive a much smaller share of state money than Jews for schooling and other services, but most are aware that their plight is better than that of other Palestinians.

"My life is good," acknowledged Yusef Mahmoud Salem, 38, whose father had been a major landowner in Gabsiyeh. "I'm a Palestinian, and I'm a citizen of Israel. I think Israel should be a country for all its citizens."

Ali agreed. He had no complaint with being Israeli, but he wanted his land back.

"We were born here, and we want to live here," he said. "I don't care who's in charge. As we say, the man married to my mother is my father."

Police arrested one of two youths who had somehow climbed onto the mosque's dome to put up a flag. In the West Bank, that would have triggered a wave of stones, but here, the youth was just told not to leave until his lawyer arrived.

"They say this is private property," he said sullenly. "I don't want to get in trouble with police. But this is our mosque. How can it be private property?"



# Israel pressed to continue reforms

WASHINGTON (R) — Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has made great strides in reforming Israel's economy but the process is slowing growth, U.S. undersecretary of state, Stuart Eizenstat, has said.

Mr. Eizenstat released a report by a prominent U.S.-Israel advisory group he chairs that strongly endorsed reforms pursued by Mr. Netanyahu.

But the group also urged that Israel go even further in cutting taxes, inflation and spending and selling controlling stakes in strategic industries like telecommunications.

The U.S.-Israel Joint Economic Development Group is an advisory body established in the mid-1980s to discuss Israeli economic policy. The U.S. goal is to promote market-oriented measures that enhance the absorption of immigrants in Israel through private-sector job creation.

Its recommendations are normally private, but Mr. Eizenstat said he went public in the hope of building support for further reforms among the Israeli public and decision-makers.

"The Netanyahu government has made tremendous strides economically

and a lot of the recommendations that we have made are already beginning to implement," Mr. Eizenstat told reporters.

No country emerging from a colonial past has accomplished as much economically as Israel and it now "stands at the cusp ... of developed country status," he said.

Despite this, Israel's economy is not performing as well as it was a few months ago and this is manifested in lower growth, stagnant per capita income and rising unemployment, he said.

"The impasse in the (Israeli-Palestinian) peace process is a major element in the current difficulties Israel is having," with tourism revenue down dramatically, he said, adding that foreign investment, although now robust, "may also suffer."

Israel, the closest U.S. ally in the Middle East, receives \$3 billion annually in U.S. aid. But Mr. Eizenstat stressed the group's proposals were advisory and that it did not attempt to dictate Israeli economic policy.

The group said that in 1999 Israel should try to "reduce the budget deficit to two per cent of gross domestic product (GDP).

reduce spending by 0.5 per cent of GDP and reduce the tax burden," which was 39.7 per cent of GDP in 1996, to 38 per cent of GDP.

The government budget should shrink to 45 per cent of GDP by the year 2000 and the budget deficit to 1.5 per cent of GDP by 2001, it said.

Deficit targets should be achieved by spending cuts not tax increases and government employment should be reduced, it said.

Mr. Eizenstat particularly hailed Israel's success at curbing inflation, which in 1985 was between 400 and 800 per cent and which many people doubted could ever be reined in.

He said Israel should reduce its 1998 inflation target from 7-10 per cent to 5-8 per cent and aim for 4-7 per cent in 1999.

He stressed the need for Israel to ensure its central bank is free from political pressure and emphasised price stability as its main mission — a key attraction for foreign investors.

Israel should also decide a specific number of companies to be transferred to private control, the report said.

transportation, financial services, construction and chemicals," it said.

The group proposed selling a controlling stake to El Al, the national airline, Bezeq, the national telephone company, and at least one of two banks, Bank Discount and Bank Leumi.

It recommended divesting fully the government's remaining stakes in Israel Chemicals and Zim, a shipping line.

It also proposed selling Israel's stakes in Afridar Building and Development Company, Lod-Ramle Regional Development Corporation, Weed Control Company, Industrial Development Bank, Israel Foreign Trade Risk Insurance Company and Israel Building Centre.

Israel should also privatise at least one of the two branches of the Oil Refineries Corporation by 1999, it said.

It should implement planned foreign exchange reforms with a view toward full convertibility by 2001, liberalise trade and open financial services further to foreign and domestic competition, the report added.

# Indonesia announces sweeping reform

JAKARTA (R) — Indonesia announced a sweeping reform package on Friday aimed at ending the worst economic crisis in decades in the huge Asian nation and set target dates to implement all key points.

"If this programme is implemented seriously and fully, we believe our economy will gradually improve," coordinating minister for the economy, Ginandjar Kartasasmita, said in a statement while announcing the package.

It was the third such agreement on reforms with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in less than six months and economic analysts said the implementation rather than the contents of the package would be key to the country's recovery.

The 117-point reform programme, agreed after more than three weeks of talks with the IMF, promises a new anti-monopoly law by the end of the year, moves to set up a bankruptcy law and a special bankruptcy court by April 22 and

regulations for winding up of companies, mergers and acquisitions by the end of September.

The government also said it would end a ban on the export of palm oil by April 22 and replace it with a tax of not more than 40 per cent. It drew up a concrete programme for privatisation of state enterprises and accelerated restructuring of the battered banking sector.

The package, called a memorandum of economic and financial policies, also provided the sketch of a framework to resolve the \$74 billion in private foreign debt, one of the key problems hedeveloping the Indonesian economy since the plunge in the rupiah from July last year.

Analysts reacted cautiously to the package, saying that while it was a step in the right direction, they needed to be convinced that the government was serious about implementation.

# OECD cuts '98 growth forecast due to Japan troubles

PARIS (AFP) — The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has cut its economic growth forecast for industrial countries in 1998 to 2.4 per cent from a December forecast of 2.5 per cent, largely due to Japan's economic woes, aggravated by the Asian crisis.

But industrial countries apart from Japan are seen weathering the fallout of the Asian crisis better than was expected at the end of last year, the OECD said in its twice-yearly Economic Outlook report.

"Overall, we maintain more optimism as far as the OECD area is concerned," Ignazio Visco, head of the OECD economics department, told a news conference.

The OECD now expects Japan's economy to shrink by 0.3 per cent this year, compared with a December forecast of 0.5 per cent growth and 1997 growth of 0.9 per cent.

"Japan's economy is on

the edge of recession... the already poor economic situation as well as the existing weakness of the financial system have been aggravated by the Asia crisis," the report said.

It urged the government to include permanent tax cuts in any fiscal stimulus package, as this would give it "a greater chance of success."

While financial and exchange market tensions in Asia eased in the first quarter of this year, "the situation in the region remains fragile" and Asian countries' efforts to adjust their economies will have a "significant" effect on the OECD as a whole, the report said.

Japan will return to growth next year, with gross domestic product (GDP) forecast to rise 1.3 per cent, while South Korea, the only other Asian OECD member, is expected to see its economy shrink 0.2 per cent this year before recovering

to GDP growth of 4.0 per cent in 1999 after showing 5.5 per cent growth in 1997.

The OECD said the Asia crisis will trim 0.5 per cent off potential OECD growth this year and 0.3 per cent next year, excluding South Korea. If South Korea is included, the crisis will trim 0.7 per cent off potential growth this year and 0.4 per cent in 1999.

"Nevertheless growth prospects for 1998-99 remain relatively favourable for the OECD area as a whole," with GDP growth of 2.4 per cent in 1998 and 2.5 per cent in 1999, down from 3.1 per cent in 1997, the OECD said.

In most OECD countries outside Asia, the underlying economic situation is generally more positive than expected earlier, it added.

Inflation is forecast to remain low, at 3.4 per cent for OECD countries overall in 1998, and 3.1 per

cent in 1999, down from 3.7 per cent in 1997. Unemployment is also seen falling slightly, to 7.1 per cent in 1998 and 7.0 per cent in 1999 from 7.2 per cent in 1997.

The OECD said the U.S. economy is expected to grow 2.7 per cent in 1998 and 2.1 per cent in 1999, with the Asian crisis helping to curb the risk of the economy overheating and reducing the need to raise interest rates.

"The weakening of U.S. exports, together with the effects of dollar appreciation on import prices, has reduced the need for increases in policy-controlled interest rates," the report said.

But it warned that inflation pressures could emerge "as soon as the situation stabilises in Asia and temporary factors contributing to the present favourable outlook wear off."

In the European Union (EU), where economic growth is forecast at 2.7

per cent in 1998 and 2.8 per cent in 1999, "the situation has been improving," the report said.

"Growth has slowed to sustainable rates in some of the countries that risked overheating, while in most countries in the prospective euro area, the recovery seems to have become more broadly based, with domestic demand finally picking up."

But it reiterated concern that EU countries taking part in the launch of the euro next year must take action to make their labour markets more flexible and reduce unemployment if the single currency is to be a success.

The report forecast the EU unemployment rate to fall to 10.9 per cent this year and 10.5 per cent in 1999 from 11.2 per cent in 1997, but EU countries remain virtually the only OECD members with double-digit unemployment rates.

The exception is Poland, with unemployment forecast at 10.1 per cent in 1998 and 9.3 in 1999.

The OECD also said that euro countries must reduce their public deficits below the 3 per cent of GDP level achieved to qualify for the euro launch, to "ensure that fiscal positions are maintained on a sustainable path over the longer term."

The OECD mid-year report is not normally released until June, but there were problems in December because by the time the report was published the figures had been overtaken by renewed chaos in Asia and officials had to give selected revisions to the printed forecasts.

The figures in this report were completed in late March. A fuller version of the report will be published at the end of May.

## THE Daily Crossword Edited by Wayne Robert Williams

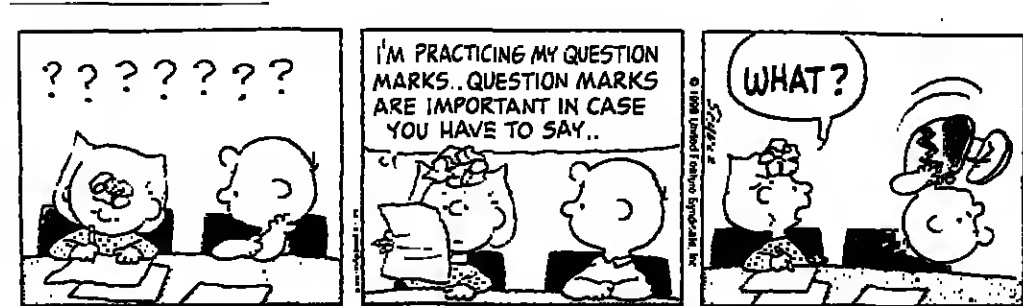
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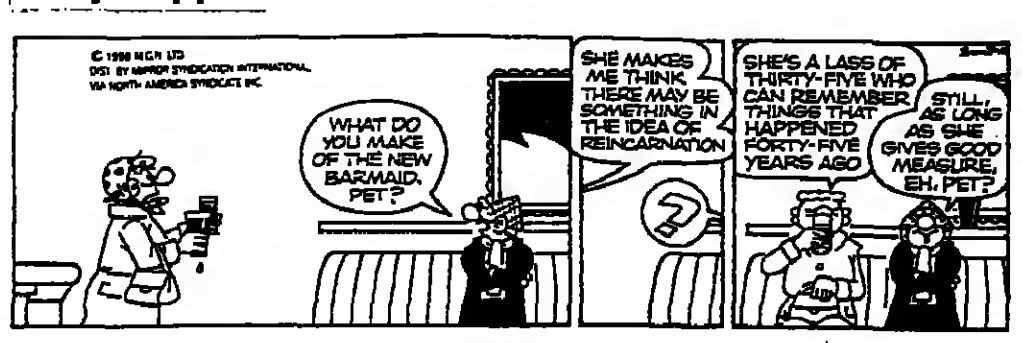
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- Classifier
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- Pueblo dweller
- On the briny
- Drug cop
- Alan and others
- Negatives
- Milano Mrs.
- Coloquialism
- peninsula
- See 47A
- Requirement
- Inexperienced
- Glasgow or Berlin
- Crocodile
- Hautboy
- Traction quality
- Apache leader
- Parial; pref.
- Last inning
- Composer
- Winey-four participant
- Carta
- Hair splitter
- Mayberry boy
- See 61A
- Ireland
- Writer Kazan
- Caesar and
- Roasting rod
- Bird's bill

## Peanuts



## Andy Capp



## Mutt'n'Jeff



## HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SATURDAY, APRIL 11, 1998

By Linda C. Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

**ARIES:** (March 21 to April 19) You're embroiled in a controversy, but don't worry. You're learning a lot from each other. Your position doesn't need defending. The best parts will be obvious to everyone, and the worst parts can be easily abandoned.

**TAURUS:** (April 20 to May 20) Your nerves may be just about frazzled by now. It feels like other people are running the show, and they're not anywhere near as good as you'd like them to be. Don't let the person who's talking the loudest take control of the situation.

**GEMINI:** (May 21 to June 21) Everybody wants your time and attention. Unfortunately, you have the trouble deciding which offer to accept. Go with the artist or poet. The intellectual type is a better match for you right now than the athlete. Choose brains over brawn.

**CANCER:** (June 22 to July 21) A domestic gathering could turn into a free-for-all if you're not careful. You may find yourself playing the referee. That's an unfortunate position to be in, since you have strong feelings about everything, too.

**LEO:** (July 22 to August 21) Continue to gather information and practise the skills you need to convince others to do things your way. Right now, it's easier for you to learn and travel. Trying to do them both at the same time may be a little bit complicated, however.

**VIRGO:** (August 22 to September 22) Your main worries have to do with money. Even if you have enough, you'll think of some reason to worry. So don't be surprised if this happens while you're out shopping today. Just acknowledge it and get on about your business.

**LIBRA:** (September 23 to October 22) You're right in the middle of a debate, but you can hold your own against the most outrageous opinion. Your skill is in opening people's minds up a little. You don't tell them they're wrong, actually. You just don't support their paranoia.

**SCORPIO:** (October 23 to November 21) People are interested in what you know. You're carefully protecting your resources, of course, but you could let a little more of the data into circulation. It's not really gossip if you're trying to clear up confusion, rather than generate it.

**SAGITTARIUS:** (November 22 to December 21) You want to go out, and your roommates or family want stay home. That's OK, if you're just going for a little while. If you plan to be gone all weekend, however, tensions could develop. Just get home as soon as possible.

**CAPRICORN:** (December 22 to January 20) You'd like to stay home in bed all day, but it looks like you'll have to travel instead. You're being summoned by an older person, possibly a parent. Don't worry. This isn't going to be as bad as you think.

**AQUARIUS:** (January 21 to February 19) There's a lot on your plate today, but you're up for a challenge. Use technology to your advantage. If you've got a laptop computer, for example, you can check your e-mail even if you're far from home.

**PISCES:** (February 20 to March 20) It will be smarter to bring money into your account than to buy an expensive luxury item. The temptation to do the latter is going to be fierce, however. Hold off until tomorrow; you'll have a little more common sense then.

Birthstone of April: Diamond — Amethyst

## THE BETTER HALF By Glasbergen



"This body wash is supposed to remove old skin cells. Will it remove enough to make me look thinner?"

## JUMBLE THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

by Henri Arnold and Mike Arghon

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

TAFOO

ANSPY

EMVOIT

TARGEY

Answer here: HE THE

Yesterday's Jumbles: DROOP DOUSE HUNTER SAVORY

Answer: What the cowboys liked to do after work — HORSE AROUND

## BUSINESS

A REVIEW OF

Low income during

MECHANISMS

planning

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## Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic Press

### Low incomes blamed for weak sales during 'Eid Al Adha holiday

\*\* MERCHANTS IN Amman complained of weak sales during the holiday of 'Eid Al Adha. They said sales volumes were even lower than the previous holiday of 'Eid Al Fitr, celebrated in February. Most merchants said the stores were crowded mainly with "window shoppers" amid calls for comparison shopping from one store to another.

The merchants attributed the weakness in the market to low incomes, competition from stores selling European goods and consumers restricting their purchases to only daily necessities.

According to William Safadi, owner of a trading store, the volume of sales was "very bad" compared to last year. He said the shortage of cash liquidity has caused a recession and a noticeable drop in sales. He went on to say that traders have lowered prices to stimulate sales which are sluggish for the most part of the year. "The per capita income does not correspond to the high cost of living," he stressed.

Samir Buteibet, a shop owner, described sales as low noting that a large number of consumers has already bought their requirements during the 'Eid Al Fitr and there was no possibility for another purchase. "Crowded markets do not mean any recovery for us," he said attributing his remark to high cost of living.

Another merchant, Odeh Dabeet, described the market as below the ordinary level despite low prices. He said a

number of traders were selling at a loss because of their need for cash liquidity. Jeweller Abdul Muez Dahnoos highlighted the suffering of many businessmen as a result of the recession which, he said, was unprecedented since the beginning of this year. "It is a drought year for all those who are in the (jewellery) business," he said.

Mohammed Jibril, owner of a store for baby clothes, said sales were blow the required level estimating it at 50 per cent less than the sales of the past season. He said that Jordanian consumers prefer to buy foreign products as local industries lack quality. Mr. Jibril described sales promotion as unfeasible because the consumers no longer trust such tactics. He favoured fixing a reasonable price with a specified profit margin.

Salah Baddawi, another merchant, agreed and emphasised that sales promotions were unrealistic and lacking objectivity. Mr. Baddawi said consumers want the good products and the cheapest prices and such a combination is difficult to achieve.

Ahmad Al Ashi said low incomes were the reason for recession and weak sales in addition to high production costs on imported goods which are also subjected to high customs tariffs. "The consumer has started to consider many products as luxury items because of the low incomes," Nafeth Harb, another merchant indicated (Al Ra'i + Al Dustour).

## Japan's central bank pulls out heavy artillery to prop up yen

TOKYO (AFP) — Japan's central bank pulled out the heavy artillery Friday, spending billions of dollars propping up the yen as dealers shrugged off the largest stimulus spending plan in the country's history.

"The Bank of Japan went ahead with massive intervention," a dealer said, as the yen hit 127.40 to the dollar shortly after 3 p.m. (0600 GMT).

That meant the currency had jumped nearly six yen, or 4.3 per cent, in one day after it tumbled to 133.16 against the greenback when the 16 trillion yen (\$123 billion) spending package was unveiled. Dealers were disappointed the four trillion yen tax cuts announced were not permanent and that Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto insisted he would stick to his tight-spending policy of curbing Japan's huge deficit.

By late trade Friday the currency had slipped back and was quoted at 129.01-05 yen to the dollar in position covering ahead of the weekend.

But Tokyo signalled it was still ready to fight.

"We are ready to pull the trigger again when necessary as our gun is always loaded," Kyodo News agency quoted an international monetary source as saying.

One New York trader at Paribas estimated the Bank of Japan had poured a massive nine billion dollars into the market by early Friday.

A trader here said the figure was certainly "huge," and nine billion dollars "may be realistic."

Others noted the central bank could take advantage of thin trade during the Easter holidays, which closed many other currency markets in the world and gave extra weight to its intervention.

"In the past it has not been more than a couple of billion dollars," said Susumu Kato, an economist at Barclays Capital.

"It is a lot of money but I doubt it is much more than

a couple of billion."

It is almost impossible to tell accurately on the day the amount of money the Bank of Japan spends buoying the currency, as it often tells dealers not to admit they are selling greenbacks for the central bank.

"Market players are relatively cool" to the spending plan, said Yutaka Miura at New Japan Securities Co. Ltd., who noted the details of the tax cuts were unclear.

Japanese share prices closed 0.3 per cent lower Friday with the key Nikkei stock average of falling 55.54 points to end at 16,481.12.

"Everyone will work out pretty quickly that the tax cuts will do little to help gross domestic product growth back into positive territory," said Garry Evans, strategist at HSBC Securities.

Overnight the U.S. Federal Reserve intervened in the market three times on behalf of Japan's central bank, arresting a rapid slide in the yen after Prime

Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto announced the tax cuts.

"It was a pretty effective intervention," said Evans.

"The Bank of Japan was thinking if they didn't step in then the market was heading for 135 or 140 yen (against the dollar) and that would set the new bottom level."

The joint U.S.-Japanese intervention was "obviously rare," said Ronald Bevacqua, economist at Merrill Lynch Japan.

"It signals that international pressure on Japan will temporarily wane. We don't know if the Americans are happy, probably they feel this is the best they could have expected from Japan."

Compounding Japan's woes, the government's economic planning agency said the economy was still in trouble, downgrading its assessment of the situation.

Analysts said even that was too optimistic.

"The economy remains stagnant and downward

## REUTERS

### The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLG	FRF
US Dollar	1.0000	1.6211	0.5974	0.6131	128.74	1.4248	1788.70	2.0080	6.1052
DE Mark	0.5491	1.0000	0.3378	0.3309	70.76	0.7822	987.27	1.2622	3.3521
GB Sterling	1.6740	3.0481	1.0000	0.7833	163.26	1.7534	2246.16	3.4633	10.2201
CH Franc	0.6609	1.2027	0.3944	1.0000	65.13	0.5410	1167.61	1.3544	4.0317
JP Yen	0.0078	0.1410	0.0037	0.0037	1.0000	0.0074	103.61	0.0037	0.0037
CA Dollar	0.7018	1.2916	0.4225	0.4225	111.11	1.0000	1270.80	1.4851	4.2354
IT Lira	0.0006	0.0117	0.0003	0.0003	1936.27	0.0003	2036.27	0.0003	0.0003
NL Guilder	0.0036	0.0066	0.0024	0.0024	62.75	0.0003	637.50	0.0003	0.0003
FR Franc	0.1638	0.2983	0.0978	0.0978	24.7814	0.0003	25.38	0.0003	0.0003

Middle Eastern Currencies									
Currency	USD	JOD	SAR	BAH	QAT	KUW	AED	LBP	EGP
US Dollar	1.0000	0.7090	3.7503	0.3770	3.6410	0.3045	3.6728	1528.00	3.4160
Jordan Dinar	1.4104	1.0000	5.2896	0.5317	5.1354	0.4295	5.1804	2155.15	4.8181
Saudi Riyal	0.2666	0.1891	1.0000	0.1005	0.97	0.0812	0.99	407.43	0.9109
Bahrain Dinar	2.85	1.8807	9.9483	1.0000	9.66	0.8077	9.74	4053.27	9.0615
Qatar Dinar	0.2746	0.1947	1.0300	1.0300	1.00	0.0836	1.01	419.66	0.9382
Kuwait Dinar	3.2841	2.3284	12.6113	1.2380	11.98	1.00	12.06	5018.06	0.9382
Emirates Dinar	0.2723	0.1930	1.0261	1.0261	0.9913	0.0829	1.00	416.02	0.9301
Lebanese L1000	0.85	0.4640	2.4544	0.2467	2.3828	0.1993	2.4037	1000.00	2.2358
Egyptian	0.2927	0.2076	1.0979	0.1104	1.0658	0.0891	1.0752	447.31	1.0000

Mid-East Currencies					
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY
SA Riyal	0.2668	0.4887	0.16929	0.40373	34.3418
AE Dirham	0.2723	0.49598	0.16284	0.41224	35.0643
KW Dinar	3.2841	5.98085	1.95194	4.97255	423.012
BH Dinar	0.3770	4.83326	1.68453	4.01608	341.647
CY Pound	1.8746	3.4138	1.1195	2.8385	241.335

Energy					
Oil	Last	Revised			
Brent	13.27	12.82			
W. Texas	15.67	15.67			
Bonny	13.27	12.82			
Dubai	12.14	11.74			
UL Gas	153.00	0.00			

Libor Fixing					
Period	1-M	3-M	6-M	1-Y	2-Y
USD	5.6797	5.7266	5.7856	5.8515	5.9115
GBP	7.4635	7.5417	7.5513	7.6208	7.6808
DEM	6.8979	6.7813	6.8021	6.8333	6.8633
JPY	3.6187	3.7438	3.8888	4.0437	4.1937
CHF	3.5313	3.6841	3.7813	3.9609	4.1409
FRF	1.5000	1.6289	1.7248	1.8375	1.9500
ITL	5.6420	5.6280	5.6900	5.7400	5.7900

Energy			JOD Cross Rates		
Commodity	Last	Delivery	Currency	Buy	Sell
Coffee (c/b)	147.83	Spot	US Dollar	0.708	0.710
Cocoa (\$/ton)	1824	Spot	GB Sterling	1.1733	1.1782
Sugar (\$/ton)	255.5	Spot	DE Mark	0.3828	0.3844
Wheat (\$/ton)	0	Spot	CH Franc	0.4833	0.4855
Soya (c/b)	28.03	Spot	FR Franc	0.1142	0.1148
Tea (c/b)	148	Spot	JP Yen	0.5241	0.5267
Barley (\$/bsh)	0	Spot	NL Guilder	0.3398	0.3413
Rice (\$/ton)	400	Spot	IT Lira	0.3881	0.39

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET															
HOUSING BANK CREDIT - JORDAN - SINCE 1981															
TELEPHONE: 501111 / 401117															
ORGANIZED MARKET TRADING ACTIVITY FOR THE PERIOD (04/04/1998 - 05/04/1998)															
WEEKLY REPORT															
DURING THE LAST WEEK															
HIGH LOW		COMPANY NAME	P/E	DIV	NO. OF CONTRACTS	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADED JO	OPENING PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSING PRICE	CHANGE	AVERAGE PRICE	MARKET TURNOVER	NO. OF TRADING DAYS
145.000	313.500	ARAB BANK	14.1	1.14	37	1420	552480	324.50	346.00	335.00	345.00	-11.50	351.454	0.31	2
1.800	1.640	JON. NATIONAL BK.	-	0.00	11	15886	131896	1.41	1.38	1.39	1.37	-0.10	1.378	1.01	2
1.770	3.750	BANK OF JORDAN	4.2	0.00	13	7500	10095	1.35	1.35	1.35	1.34	-0.01	1.346	0.08	2
1.970	9.700	HIL. EAST. INTL. BK.	9.5	0.00	1	250	250	1.95	1.00	1.00	1.00	-0.05	1.000	0.03	1
1.740	1.710	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	9.1	0.01	1	250	250	1.75	1.15	1.15	1.14	-0.01	1.158	0.03	1
5.230	4.850	THE HOUSING BK.	17.4	2.43	132	72310	390875	5.20	5.00	5.00	5.00	-0.20	5.113	1.44	2
1.400	1.810	JON. KIWAT BANK	-	0.00	4	409	739	1.85	1.82	1.81	1.81	-0.04	1.807	0.03	2
4.70	1.550	JON. ISLAMIC BANK	3.7	11.29	15	8834	5451	4.43	4.62	4.60	4.62	-0.19	4.611	0.45	2
1.030	1.030	UNION BK. SAV. INV.	142.4	0.00	2	10300	2514	1.95	1.94	1.91	1.91	-0.04	1.921	0.15	2
2.070	2.070	JON. INV. FIN. BANK	12.7	0.00	1	100	197	2.07	1.91	1.91	1.97	-0.10	1.970	0.01	1
1.710	1.710	JON. INV. FIN. BANK/HEM	-	0.00	2	374	404	1.11	1.62	1.62	1.62	-0.01	1.530	0.07	1
1.920	1.920	HIL. EAST. INTL. BK.	9.5	0.00	1	250	250	1.95	1.00	1.00	1.00	-0.05	1.000	0.03	1
2.740	2.740	ARAB BANKING CO.	21.9	0.00	1	200	558	2.94	2.79	2.79	2.79	-0.15	2.790	0.01	1
CHANGE: 1.3.397															
RANKS SECTOR															
2.050	1.930	JON. FRENCH INSUR.	5.9	11.85	11	15058	30556	2.03	2.11	2.02	2.11	-0.08	2.030	4.85	2
2.200	2.208	PHILADELPHIA INSUR.	10.5	0.00	3	7000	15050	2.20	2.10	2.10	2.20	-0.10	2.150	5.83	1
2.100	2.050	ARAB LIFE INSUR.	8.4	0.00	7	55255	114019	2.10	2.10	2.10	2.10	-0.01	2.100	2.511	1
CHANGE: 1.0.394															
INSURANCE SECTOR															
2.110	2.000	JON. ELECTRIC PWR.	10.2	4.72	21	118550	593118	2.10	2.13	2.10	2.12	-0.03	2.106	7.90	2
5.500	6.700	HIL. EAST. INTL. BK.	9.5	0.00	5	1830	7850	6.29	5.50	4.08	5.50	-0.21	4.290	1.511	2
1.110	2.020	NATL. PORTFOLIO	43.1	0.00	42	24275	25560	1.02	1.08	1.02	1.08	-0.06	1.053	5.85	2
9.500	9.700	ARAB LIFE	9.5	0.00	4	1500	1500	9.70	1.00	1.00	1.00	-0.01	1.000	0.03	1
2.180	1.120	HIL. EAST. INTL. BK.	18.3	0.00	2	50	555	1.90	1.90	1.90	1.90	-0.01	1.900	0.02	1
4.510	5.270	ARAB. INTL. INV. FUND.	10.3	1.93	5	582	2006	6.17	5.20	5.15	5.15	-0.02	5.152	0.05	1
2.900	2.920	ZARA EDUCATION	26.9	0.00	8	3600	3432	2.95	2.96	2.96	2.96	-0.01	2.950	0.00	2
2.810	2.520	UNITED CO.	6.9	7.10	2	600	930	2.52	2.55	2.55	2.55	-0.03	2.550	0.12	1
1.670	1.630	UNION BANK	-	0.00	1	500	315	1.65	1.63	1.63	1.63	-0.02	1.630	0.11	1
CHANGE: 1.0.333															
SERVICES SECTOR															
2.110	1.000	ATTACHEE	-	0.00	3	33085	15393	1.10	2.10	1.10	1.10	-0.01	1.100	0.67	1
2.040	2.710	JON. CHEMIST FACT.	18.5	6.03	32	39065	10405	2.13	2.14	2.13	2.13	-0.01	2.130	0.62	2
3.300	3.700	JON. PHOSPHATE MINES	8.9	3.13	8	15000	44831	3.20	3.21	3.20	3.20	-0.01	3.200	0.62	2
6.000	5.700	ARAB POLICE CO.	14.3	3.24	13	26135	5750	5.80	5.80	5.80	5.80	-0.15	5.808	0.65	2
10.000	10.400	JON. PETROL-REFINERY	10.4	8.30	15	5604	59960	10.65	10.75	10.60	10.71	-0.06	10.700	1.008	2
2.200	1.170	HIL. EAST. INTL. BK.	18.3	0.00	2	50	555	1.90	1.90	1.90	1.90	-0.01	1.900	0.02	1
2.740	1.100	INDUSTRIAL COMM. GR.	10.9	0.00	6	2300	2342	1.20	1.24	1.24	1.26	-0.06	1.259	0.02	1
5.500	5.060	ARAB PHARM. MANF.	14.7	3.74	76	31450	143498	5.14	5.35	5.15	5.35	-0.21	5.228	1.305	2
2.250	2.200	JON. PIPES MANF.	20.7	1.75	1	50	65	1.24	1.78	1.79	1.75	-0.04	1.300	0.02	1
5.200	5.200	ALMAJED BANK	7.3	5.07	5	4500	25571	5.70	5.94	5.70	5.96	-0.26	5.776	0.77	1
2.900	2.700	ARAB ALUM. IND.	4.6	8.93	1	800	1580	2.81	2.80	2.80	3.00	-0.01	3.000	0.10	1
1.510	1.670	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	26.9	0.00	26	207050	13192	59	50	48	50	-0.01	48.0	2.10	2
1.570	1.700	ARAB PAPER COV. TRD.	20.5	0.00	9	2000	1350	1.70	1.60	1.67	1.67	-0.03	1.675	0.65	1
1.570	1.540	NATIONAL INDS.	-	0.00	2	1000	550	1.55	1.55	1.55	1.55	-0.01	1.550	0.11	2
4.500	4.00	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	18.3	0.00	25	30000	12282	4.00	4.41	4.40	4.41	-0.01	4.402	0.61	2
1.540	1.520	JON. PETROL-REFINERY	10.9	8.30	2	50	555	1.90	1.90	1.90	1.90	-0.01	1.900	0.02	1
1.220	1.120	NATL. CABLE WIRE. MANF.	37.5	0.00	9	3093	2347	1.13	1.14	1.13	1.15	-0.01	1.133	0.23	1
1.410	1.550	JON. SUIVING-CERN	-	0.00	19	16100	9398	1.58	1.58	1.51	1.58	-0.07	1.511	0.42	2
1.390	1.390	ARAB PHARM. CHEM.	17.2	5.19	15	2450	3412	1.32	1.35	1.26	1.35	-0.04	1.310	0.35	2
1.530	1.470	RANCHER INVEST.	09.3	0.00	2	3050	1525	1.51	1.50	1.50	1.50	-0.01	1.500	0.15	1
1.100	1.910	UNIV. MOD. INDS.	15.0	4.38	15	9450	8800	1.91	1.01	0.92	1.01	-0.01	0.93	1.58	1
1.790	1.400	JON. INDS. RESOURCES	9.5	15.88	29	22750	16256	1.56	1.76	1.71	1.71	-0.04	1.715	0.85	2
2.500	1.468	NATL. CEMENT	14.0	4.73	2	700	1022	1.46	1.48	1.41	1.48	-0.07	1.474	0.10	2
1.200	1.210	UNION TOBACCO	6.5	0.00	23	257000	292590	1.18	1.19	1.16	1.18	-0.01	1.141	2.510	2
1.090	1.010	UNION CH. & VEG.	41.7	0.00	19	28100	8915	1.03	1.05	1.03	1.05	-0.03	1.035	0.424	2
1.840	1.400	JORDAN STEEL	9.5	8.24	19	15429	12945	1.85	1.85	1.83	1.85	-0.02	1.843	0.63	2
1.440	1.410	JO. EAST COMPLEX	7.8	15.87	9	30450	12721	1.42	1.45	1.41	1.41	-0.01	1.422	0.93	2
CHANGE: 1.5.537															
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR															
1.400	1.400	UNION TOBACCO	6.5	0.00	23	257000	292590	1.18	1.19	1.16	1.18	-0.01	1.141	2.510	2
1.090	1.010	UNION CH. & VEG.	41.7	0.00	19	28100	8915	1.03	1.05	1.03	1.05	-0.03	1.035	0.424	2
1.840	1.400	JORDAN STEEL	9.5	8.24	19	15429	12945	1.85	1.85	1.83	1.85	-0.02	1.843	0.63	2
1.440	1.410	JO. EAST COMPLEX	7.8	15.87	9	30450	12721	1.42	1.45	1.41	1.41	-0.01	1.422	0.93	2
CHANGE: 1.5.537															
GRABO TOTAL															
1.400	1.400	UNION TOBACCO	6.5	0.00	23	257000	292590	1.18	1.19	1.16	1.18	-0.01	1.141	2.510	2
1.090	1.010	UNION CH. & VEG.	41.7	0.00	19	28100	8915	1.03	1.05	1.03	1.05	-0.03	1.035	0.424	2
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1.840	1.400	JORDAN STEEL	9.5	8.24	19	15429	12945	1.85	1.85	1.83	1.85</				



100



## Cairo team wins 4-nation Amman rugby tournament

By Roufan Nahhas  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Cairo rugby team were crowned champions after beating Jordan's first team 12-6 in the Four-Nation Rugby Championship held at Al Hussein Sports City.

Jordan battled the heat and dust and led the first half 6-0 but Cairo's unbeatable attacks were back in full power in the second half.

Jordan concentrated more on defence and rarely had the chance to attack especially in the second half.

"We fought bravely in the first half but we lost so many chances to attack," coach Mike Sedman told the Jordan Times.

It was a match to watch as Jordanian fans, sweating under the blazing sun, cheered for their favourite team who missed the chance to win the Prince Abdullah Trophy.

The weekend event inaugurates the new grounds which were donated to the Jordan Rugby Football Club (JRFC) by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan.

HRH Prince Ra'd presented the winning team with the Prince Abdullah Trophy, expressing hope to see more local partici-

pants in the coming events. HRH Prince Abdullah had attended the training sessions but did not take part in the matches.

The JRFC hosted teams from Cyprus, Egypt, Lebanon and Jordan over the weekend.

Cairo reached the finals after beating Episkopi Eagles 24-7 and Cyprus Stags 64-3.

Jordan first team overcame Beirut 27-0 and the Jordan Falcons 64-0.

Rugby is not totally new on the Kingdom's sports scene. Prior to the Gulf war there was a rugby club in Jordan made up of expatriates and one Jordanian. That group sent a team to the Dubai Sevens in 1989. The next

time a team from Jordan was to participate in the same tournament was in 1996.

Now Jordan has two teams half of which are Jordanians. The idea was resurrected in 1994 through an advertisement in the Jordan Times by Martin Cronin, then second secretary at the British embassy in Amman.

The advertisement did its job and more Jordanians became part of this team.

The team was regrouped and started training in mid-1996 on a small plot of grassy land within the British embassy grounds. Fans were able to enjoy

a spectacle of a parachute drop Friday prior to the trophy final.

Like Jordan, Cyprus had two teams entered in the event. Jordan Falcons were out in the two-day event after losing their matches against Jordan First team and Beirut.

Each team consisted of 15 players — 8 forwards and seven backs.

In rugby any player can score and their objectives are just to win possession of the ball. This is done in "scrums" (when play has stopped and they bind together) "line outs" (when the ball is thrown in from the side) or in "rucks" and "mauls" (when they bind together as lay in running).

### Thursday's matches

Episkopi Eagles v Cairo	7-24
Jordan v Beirut	27-0
Episkopi Eagles v Cyprus	6-32
Jordan v Beirut	0-64
Episkopi Eagles v Beirut	64-3
Jordan v Beirut	39-7
Friday's matches	
Jordan v Beirut	0-24
Episkopi Eagles v Beirut	32-20
Jordan v Beirut	12-6

## European Soccer Preview

### Juventus enter final straight while Real look to consolidate

PARIS (AFP) — Italian champions Juventus enter the final straight of their Serie A season this weekend with coach Marcello Lippi calling on them to give everything they have while their Spanish counterparts Real Madrid desperately seek to consolidate their second place behind Barcelona.

In Germany Bayern Munich host lowly city rivals TSV 1860 Munich with the chance of cutting leaders Kaiserslautern's lead to just one point while in France the league takes a rest as the French Cup enters the semi-final stage.

Juventus have an easy tie on paper against a Piacenza side struggling, as ever, to beat relegation at the end of the season.

Buoyed up by last Sunday's 1-0 victory over Lazio, which almost certainly made the Serie A title a two-horse race with Inter Milan, Juventus will be at full strength for the game in Turin.

Lippi said: "We can only gauge the importance of beating Lazio after Saturday's game. Everyone says the title is decided in the head-to-head games among the top clubs, but I think it's in the supposedly easy matches."

"We nearly jeopardised our whole season by drawing with Napoli, Lazio did the same by drawing with Piacenza and Inter by losing at home to Bari and Bologna. Beating Lazio will only count for a lot if we also beat Piacenza."

Alessandro Del Piero and Filippo "Super Pippo" Inzaghi will lead the attack, hoping to add to their 53-goal total this season, although there may also be room for Uruguayan Marcelo Zalayeta.

Trying to stop them will be the oldest man in the Serie A, Piacenza defender Pietro Vierchowod, who turned 39 this week and who was well into his second season as a professional on the day Zalayeta was born.

In Spain Real Madrid's vain hopes of

overhauling Barcelona in the championship all but disappeared on Tuesday when the Catalan side used their game in hand to beat Real Betis 2-0 and move 11 points clear of last season's champions.

Real must now hope to qualify for next season's Champions League by either winning this season's European Cup or retaining their second place in the league.

They face a difficult trip to fifth placed Celta Vigo on Saturday and look likely to be without the injured duo of Yugoslav striker Predrag Mijatovic and young Spanish star Fernando Morientes — Croat Davor Suker and Emilio Amavisca will fill in.

Celta, who have been the surprise package of the title race this season, will be without their influential Brazilian World Cup winning midfielder star Mazinho, who scored a brilliant goal in his side's 3-1 win over Barcelona a fortnight ago.

Barcelona, who have come back from a hugely disappointing Champions League campaign to be within two or three games of sealing the title, travel to modest Merida.

Bayern Munich have everything to play for after Kaiserslautern dropped another two points against Borussia Dortmund on Thursday evening.

Five games are left to play and Kaiserslautern's lead has melted to four points after failing to win their last seven matches — although the leaders will have what could prove to be a vital game in hand after the Munich derby.

All of Munich is huzzing although 1860 last beat Bayern 21 years ago. Even so, these Bavarian derbies are always passionate affairs and a highlight of Munich's football calendar.

"The city is split down the middle between red and blue. I hardly know anyone who doesn't care about this game," Bayern's Mehmet Scholl said.

As Bayern gun for the title 1860, however, will be happy if they can simply scrape through for another season of football in Germany's top division.

"It doesn't have to be a good game, just a win," Bayern manager Uli Hoeness said.

"We want the title and plan to cause Kaiserslautern a lot of trouble," he added.

Despite their outward confidence Bayern will be without four key players Thomas Helmer, Mario Basler, Brazilian striker Giovane Elber and Alexander Zickler because of injury.

The French Cup semi-finals are split between Saturday and Sunday as first double chasing Lens host UEFA Cup hopefuls Lyon and Paris Saint Germain, who captured the League Cup last Saturday, host last year's beaten finalists Guingamp.

Lens, who lead Metz by two points in the title race, will be at almost full strength as they have only a doubt over their Czech Republic star Vladimir Smicer who picked up an injury in Tuesday's 3-0 win over Rennes.

Lyon, who will leave out former French international wing Reynald Pedros for the second successive match, will definitely be without playmaker Philippe Violeau and he is likely to be replaced by Polish international sweeper Jacek Bak.

Paris, who have recovered some of their early season poise and form, must wait on Brazilian inspiration Rai, who will wait until Friday before declaring whether he has recovered from an ankle injury he picked up in the League Cup final.

Guingamp, who face a tough battle against relegation, will hope that influential Romanian World Cup veteran George Mihaili recovers from a left ankle injury if they are to try and make it two French Cup finals in a row.

## Sri Lanka bans Asia's fastest woman over drug scandal

COLOMBO (AFP) — Sri Lanka's star athlete and Asia's fastest woman, Susanthika Jayasinghe, 20, was suspended Friday after testing positive a second time for performance enhancing drugs, officials said.

The International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) told the local Amateur Athletic Association (AAA) that Jayasinghe's second urine "B" sample taken last month was found to contain traces of Nandrolone, a banned steroid.

The IAAF also rejected an explanation by the runner after her first sample, taken during a random off season testing of athletes training for the Sydney 2000 Olympic games, also tested positive last month.

"Her explanation was not accepted by the IAAF and we have therefore decided to temporarily suspend her pending an official inquiry," Sri Lanka's AAA Secretary Rohan Amarasinghe said.

He did not say what the international athletic governing body's reaction was to calls by Susanthika Jayasinghe as well as local authorities for a fresh dope test.

"According to international rules, we are forced to accept that she has used banned drugs," Amarasinghe said.

The 200m runner-up at last year's world championships claimed the samples taken last month had not been properly sealed and she accused sports

ministry officials of tampering with them.

Jayasinghe was not immediately available for comment, but her husband, Dhammika, said they were yet to be informed of the ban. "Of course this means that she will not be able to go to China for a commercial 'world's fastest woman' race next month," he said. Last week, Jayasinghe said Sri Lankan sports ministry officials may have tampered with her failed drug test and expressed her willingness to present herself for any further tests.

"I don't have a fountain of Nandrolone in my body," the 20-year-old told a press conference at her Colombo apartment last week. "I showed ministry doctors that the urine containers were not sealed and anyone could have opened them."

Jayasinghe said officials, whom she has previously accused of sexual harassment, may have tampered with the sample to discredit her.

"My conscience is clear. The only drugs I have taken are Disprin, Panadol and the pill as a contraceptive," Jayasinghe said. Disprin and Panadol are headache relievers.

"I am willing to subject not only my urine but blood or any part of me to an international body," she said.

Jayasinghe missed training for three months after winning silver at the world championships last year following earlier accusations against the

sports ministry.

The sprinter's mother accused a top politician of forcibly having sex with Jayasinghe and threatening her unless she divorced her husband.

"I am told that the lab in Australia got my urine sample in a tamper proof container and well sealed but when I gave the sample I showed ministry doctors that the two bottles for sample 'A' and 'B' could be opened, (without) leaving any trace of tampering," Jayasinghe said.

Jayasinghe failed tests in 1994 and 1996, which also found Nandrolone. She was cleared after a second test and her explanation that she had taken medicine to delay menstruation.

Jayasinghe is the best athlete to come out of South Asia and favourite for a gold medal at this year's Asian Games. She was among five potential Sri Lankan Olympic athletes given a drugs test last month. The other four tested negative.

"I can't read, write or understand English. So I don't know what was given to me by my doctors. But when I was tested in Athens in August it was negative," she said.

She resumed training three months after the world championships last August after assurances that she would be left alone by ministry officials.

San Francisco Giants center fielder Darryl Hamilton (R) dives back to first base ahead of the tag by Houston Astros first basemen Jeff Bagwell (L) on a pick-off attempt in the first inning in San Francisco (Reuters photo)



## Frenchman exposes Becker's lack of match practice

CHENNAI, India (AFP) — Boris Becker's lack of matchplay now that he is semi-retired was cruelly exposed in the second round of the ATP tournament here on Thursday where he was humbled 4-6, 6-3, 6-2 by little-known Frenchman Gerard Solves.

The 30-year-old German has now failed to advance beyond the second round in any of the three tournaments he has played this year.

Top seeded Patrick Rafter of Australia joined Solves in the quarter-finals with a 6-2, 6-4 win over Ivo Heuberger of Switzerland, while second seeded Australian Todd Woodbridge struggled for the second straight day before overcoming Italy's Cristiano Caratti 6-0, 6-7 (5/7), 6-2.

Solves, who has a world ranking of 155, has enjoyed only modest success and spends most of his career on the lowly Challenger circuit.

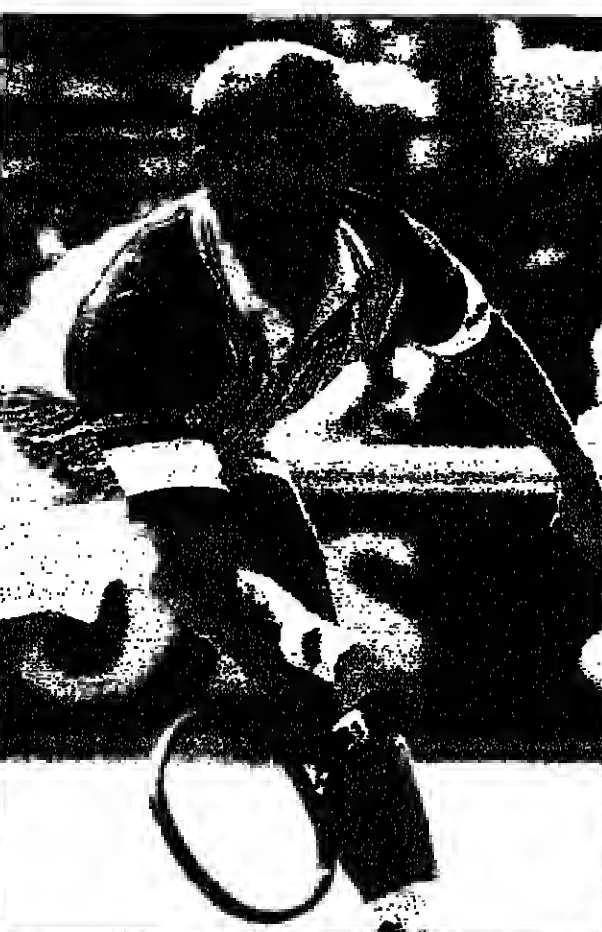
But he was able to take advantage of a subdued Becker performance, consistently passing him at the net or punishing him with a succession of winning returns.

"I give him total credit," Becker said.

"He went for his shots when it mattered. He wasn't afraid to hit the ball and at moments came up with shots that were incredible, and I became slow as the match went on," he added.

Playing only a limited schedule, Becker knows he cannot hope to offer the same challenge as players committed to a full-time career. But he denied that was the reason behind his shock defeat.

"It's part of sports that you lose sometimes, and even when I played full-time I had very bad matches,"



Boris Becker

found his back against the wall when Caratti broke to lead 5-4.

Woodbridge managed to hold him off and then earned a match point at 6-5, but Caratti levelled the match in the tiebreak. In the final set, Woodbridge called for the trainer fearing that he might be developing cramps, but he was able to continue and claim victory.

Although he has been stretched in both his matches this week, Woodbridge is able to see a positive side to his performances.

"It concerns me a little bit," said Woodbridge, who drank eight litres of water to combat the humidity.

"I'm way off my best, but

I've really scraped through well and for me that's good. Mentally I've really played hard, and that's a good sign for me, to be really digging and getting through tough situations," he added.

Rafter, with less matches than usual under his belt this year because of injury, admitted he is lacking a little confidence. But he was never in trouble against Heuberger.

"He gave me a lot more rhythm and it was easier to play than my first match. I definitely hit the ball better," the U.S. Open champion said.

"And I love the atmosphere here. The crowd are really boisterous. They're like a cricket crowd, actually," he added.

Leander Paes volleyed superbly to take the opening set from sixth seeded Frenchman Jerome Golmard, but failed to maintain the pressure as the Frenchman rallied in the second.

But at 2-1 in the final set Golmard collapsed with cramps, and although he continued after treatment he dropped his serve, collapsed again in the next game, and surrendered the match with the Indian leading 7-6 (7/4), 2-6, 3-1.

In other matches, third seed Mark Woodforde of Australia progressed with a comfortable 6-4, 6-2 victory over Rainer Schuttler of Germany, seventh seed Arnaud Clement of France was beaten 6-3, 6-2 by Germany's Lars Burgsmuller, defending champion and fifth seed Mikael Tillstrom of Sweden eased past France's Olivier Delaire 7-5, 6-3, and eighth seeded Romanian Andrei Pavel beat Allen Belobrajdic of Australia 6-4, 6-0.

## SCOREBOARD

Louis 7	Colorado 5
Albuquerque 7	Arizona 2
Louis 3	San Francisco 1
Bundesliga	
Kaiserslautern 1	Borussia Dortmund 1
VfB Stuttgart 1	Hansa Rostock 3
Amelia Island ITF Tour	
Amelia Island (x2) bt Magnus Serna (Spa)	
Amelia Island (x2) bt Barbara Rimmer (Ger)	
Amelia Island (x2) bt Catalina Cristea (Rom)	
Amelia Island (x2) bt Anne Miller (USA)	
Amelia Island (x2) bt Jennifer Capriati (USA) bt Barbara Schett (Aut)	



ANKARA (AFP) — Turkish troops Friday killed seven separatist Kurdish rebels in a clash near Turkey's most popular tourism resort. Antalya on the Mediterranean coast, the Anatolia news agency reported.

It marks the first major clash in that area between security forces and rebels from the outlawed Kurdish Labour Party (PKK), who usually operate in the country's Kurdish-dominated southeast near the Iranian and Iraqi borders.

The clash took place in a mountainous area near the town of Serik, 30 kilometres east of Antalya, Antalya governor Husnu Tuglu told the

A Turkish officer was also heavily injured in the fighting, he said. The gendarmerie forces were continuing an operation to capture other rebels in the area.

The Antalya area was visited by more than three million foreign tourists last year.

The fighting report came as a bomb exploded Friday in Istanbul injuring nine people, including three foreign tourists, near the Blue Mosque, one of the city's most popular tourist sites.

No one claimed responsibility for the bombing, but Interior Minister Murat Basasegınoğlu told reporters that

Two Indians, one New Zealander, four Turkish civilians and two Turkish soldiers were injured in the powerful blast, which took place in a park near the Blue Mosque, a police spokesman said. None was in critical condition.

It was not immediately clear if the Istanbul bombing and the PKK's unusual presence in the Antalya area were linked.

The PKK has threatened to stage attacks on Turkey's holiday resorts if the Turkish military continues operations against the group.

The group has been fighting

the Ankara government since 1984 for an independent Kurdish state in the southeast. More than 29,000 people have been killed in the conflict.

PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan last weekend proposed a ceasefire, also threatening to step up attacks throughout the country in the event the government turned down his truce offer.

Turkish Defence Minister Ismet Sezgin rejected the proposal on Thursday, qualifying the offer as a tactic and saying the government would continue with anti-PKK military operations.

**THROUGH THE VIA DOLOROSA:** Israeli Border Police stand against a wall on the Via Dolorosa as Christian pilgrims carry a cross Friday during Good Friday processions as they retrace the traditional route Jesus Christ took to his crucifixion. Tonight also marks the beginning of the Jewish Passover holiday commemorating the biblical exodus from slavery in Egypt. Muslims today flocked to Al Aqsa Mosque for the last day of the 'Eid Al Adha holiday (Reuters photo) (see story on page 1)

## Pavarotti announces concert to aid Liberian children

NEW YORK (AP) — Tenor Luciano Pavarotti will hold his annual charity concert this year on June 9 in Modena, Italy. The tenor said the concert will benefit the Pavarotti and Friends Liberian Children's Village, to provide refuge for children in the West African nation still suffering in the aftermath of a war that ended in 1996. Performers are to include Jon Bon Jovi, Natalie Cole, Celine Dion, the Spice Girls, Stevie Wonder and Trisha Yearwood, among others.

## Jackson brothers are back

LOS ANGELES (AFP) — The Jackson brothers are back, according to the Hollywood Reporter. It said Michael and brothers Jackie, Jermaine, Marlon, Randy and Tito have begun work on a new album together. The first record the King of Pop has made with his lesser-known siblings since "Victory" in 1984 is tentatively entitled "15," it added. Jackie, Jermaine, Randy and Tito joined up — without Michael — to make the album "2300 Street" in 1989.

### Kubrick orders Jason Leigh to reshoot all her scenes

PARIS (AFP) — Stanley Kubrick has ordered actress Jennifer Jason Leigh back to the set of "Eyes Wide Shut" to re-shoot all her scenes. According to the French weekly "Le film français," Kubrick was so unhappy with her acting performance first time round that he's told her to do it all over again. The film, a thriller of jealousy and sexual obsession starring husband and wife team Tom Cruise and Nicole Kidman, has already dragged on since November 1996. With the reshooting of some scenes, it won't be ready for presentation at the Mostra film festival in Venice in early September, the weekly said. Cruise and Kidman star as two married New York psychiatrists who both have affairs with their clients, played by Leigh and Sydney Pollack.

## Malkovich to enter the Ladies' Room

PARIS (AFP) — John Malkovich enters the Ladies' Room next week. That's the title of the latest film he's starring in — shooting starts in Montreal on Monday — and he'll have plenty of female company. "Ladies' Room" also stars Greta Scacchi, of "Emma" and "Jefferson in Paris" fame, Lorraine Bracco of "Goodfellas" and Veronica Ferres and Molly Parker. It's an Anglo-Canadian co-production set in the world of ballet, opera and theatre, and follows a group of women who share their secrets and the latest gossip in the ladies' restrooms.

## Navarro quits Red Hot Chilli Peppers

PARIS (AFP) — Guitarist Dave Navarro has quit the Red Hot Chili Peppers, the American rock group's record company said. Navarro joined the group in 1995 for the album "One Hot Minute," becoming the latest in a string of guitarists replacing founding member Hillel Slovak, who died of a drugs overdose in 1988. The French wing of the Peppers' record company WEA said the guitarist and the group were parting company amicably. Meanwhile the band plays on. Singer Anthony Kiedis and bass guitarist Flea (Michael Balzary) are working on songs for their next album, WEA said. Navarro, once of Jane's Addiction, is already working with another group which includes the Peppers' drummer Chad Smith.

CAIRO (AFP) — Egyptian Oil Minister Hamdi Al Banbi on Friday blamed the Israeli government for the continued deadlock in talks over planned Egyptian exports of natural gas to Israel.

"The halt in Egyptian-Israeli negotiations on natural gas exports is due to political difficulties between Israel and its Arab neighbours since [Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin] Netanyahu came to power," the official Egyptian MENA news agency quoted Mr. Banbi as saying.

"This is also the reason for

Israel's inability to build a gas network or take a decision on using natural gas as an alternative to fuel oil or coal," he added.

"Negotiations are suspended and there are no signs they will begin again soon," he said.

Mr. Banbi said Egypt is now negotiating with "more serious countries than Israel which are considered as major consumers," adding that Israel is not considered the principal consumer for Egyptian gas.

He said Egypt has "contacts with the Italian Edison company" to furnish natural gas to

Italy's electrical power plants. Egypt and Israel opened talks at the start of 1996 for Egyptian exports of some 2.5 billion cubic metres of natural gas beginning in 2000. The last meeting on the subject in late 1996 was inconclusive.

Israel had called for international bids on constructing a gas pipe from Egypt to Israel as far north as the Israeli port of Haifa.

At the time the project was considered the biggest regional cooperation project since the start of the Israeli-Arab peace process in 1991.

## Netanyahu, Barak even again in the polls

**TEL AVIV (AFP)** — Israeli opposition chief Ehud Barak pulled even with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in the latest voter opinion poll released Friday after weeks of lagging behind the right-wing leader.

In the survey published by the Yediot Aharonot newspaper, Mr. Netanyahu and Mr. Barak both received the support of 41 per cent of the respondents asked who they would vote for in prime ministerial elections were held today.

## Netanyahu says he came close to being ousted by his Likud Party

**TEL AVIV (AP)**—In an interview marking the first half of his term, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Friday he made many mistakes and at one point thought he would get fired by his own party.

Since winning the May 1996 election by a razor-thin margin, Mr. Netanyahu has survived a series of crises, including an influence-peddling scandal in which he barely escaped indictment.

In November, senior figures in his Likud Party rebelled over attempts by Mr. Netanyahu associates to abolish primaries, giving the power to pick Knesset candidates to a central committee stacked with Netanyahu loyalists. Mr. Netanyahu relented when

Reviewing his first two years in office, Mr. Netanyahu told the Yediot Ahronot daily on Friday: "There was definitely a danger that they would oust me, but thankfully I managed... to take care of the crisis."

"I am not ashamed to say I made many mistakes. The first year [in office] is about making mistakes, the second year is about fixing them," said Mr. Netanyahu.

In the wake of the Likud mutiny, Mr. Netanyahu said he did some soul-searching.

"Something here has to change, I told myself. You are the head of this operation, start

implementing different work practices," said Mr. Netanyahu.

The prime minister who had little political experience when he became Israel's youngest prime minister said it took him time to understand what was expected of him and where his priorities lay.

He said he had now settled into the role.

Asked why he was seen as unreliable by foreign leaders, Mr. Netanyahu said the accusations were unfair.

"It's a mantra. But, because it is repeated so often it is practically accepted as a truth... I never told any foreign leader anything I did not then stand by, and I never promised anything I did not deliver," said Mr. Netanyahu.

## Cyprus MPs want action against Britain

**NICOSIA (R)** — Cypriot parliamentarians want the government to take legal action against the British base authorities in Cyprus, who they say violated the immunity of a Cypriot MP last week, officials said on Friday.

Democratic Party MP **Marios Matsakis**, an outspoken critic of Britain's military presence on the Mediterranean island, was

detained briefly on April 3 when he disregarded an order barring him from a chases court.

Mr. Matsakis was later charged with criminal trespass and breach of the peace and released.

"What they did is outrageous," said one of the parliament's 56 MPs.

"We have requested that the attorney-general consider whether legal action is possi-

"If he says it is not possible then we will introduce legislation allowing [Cyprus] police to investigate crimes committed in the bases," he told Reuters.

## Thousands march in memory of Sabra and Shatila massacre of Palestinians in Lebanon

# As if those

BEIRUT (AFP) — More than 2,000 people took part in a silent, candlelight march to the burial site of 1,500 Palestinian refugees massacred in Beirut's Sabra and Shatila camps after revelations that the cemetery had been used as a dump.

Men, women and children holding candles and white roses symbolising the innocence of the civilian victims slain in 1982 marched in silence to the cemetery from a nearby intersection, witnesses said.

When they reached the centre of the mass grave, they repeated verses from the Hymn of the Dead.

*buried the*  
sang by Lebanese singer  
Marcel Khalifeh.  
"Our beloved the dead...  
we will not forget you...  
you were great," they  
chanted in unison about the  
victims, who were massa-  
cred by Christian milita-  
naries during the Israeli in-  
vasion 16 years ago.  
The marchers then dug  
holes in the ground for the  
candles and laid the flow-  
ers on one side of the cem-  
etery.  
The silent march com-  
memorated the massacre in  
Sabra and Shatila that fol-  
lowed the assassination of  
Lebanese president-elect  
Bashir Gemayel on Sept.  
14, 1982.  
For three days,

*They had been*

Gemayel's partisans entered the camps, which were ringed by the Israeli army, and slaughtered their inhabitants.

April 9 also marks the 50th anniversary of a massacre in the village of Deir Yassin in Palestine by the Jewish militant Stern and Argun groups.

Early Thursday, Lebanese refuse workers began cleaning the Sabra and Shatila victims' cemetery here after grief-stricken relatives of the dead this week condemned its desecration.

The graveyard had been turned into a garbage dump over the years, and the Beirut newspaper, Al-Afkar, wrote this week that it was

**killed twice**

as if those buried there had been "killed twice."

Employees of Sukleem, a private company hired by the government to clean Beirut and its suburbs, removed trash bags and raked up the soil of the mass grave where sewage from nearby shanty towns has drained.

After the Israeli withdrawal from Beirut, Palestinian organisations constructed a memorial in the cemetery with a commemorative plaque, and planted trees and flowers around the mass grave.

But while the slain Palestinians were regarded as "martyrs," their burial place was left to deteriorate

Following the 1985-1988 "war of the camps" which expelled Palestinians against the pro-Syrian Lebanese Shi'ite Amal militia. The Sabra camp was razed, and the partisans of Yasser Arafat's Palestine Liberation Organisation were evicted. In the ruins of the Shatila camp, only a few houses were rebuilt. Today, the cemetery is in the corner of a shanty town inhabited mostly by poor Syrian workers and Lebanese Shi'ite Muslims who fled the Israeli occupation of south Lebanon.

A Palestinian family puts up with the Palestinian mass grave and Shatila massacre (Reuters)



Thursday, candles on the wall  
for victims of the 1982 Sabra  
ers photo)

PARIS (AFP) — Guitarist Dave Navarro has quit the Red Hot Chili Peppers, the American rock group's record company said. Navarro joined the group in 1995 for the album "One Hot Minute," becoming the latest in a string of guitarists replacing founding member Hillel Slovak, who died of a drugs overdose in 1988. The French wing of the Peppers' record company WEA said the guitarist and the group were parting company amicably. Meanwhile the band plays on. Singer Anthony Kiedis and bass guitarist Flea (Michael Balzary) are working on songs for their next album, WEA said. Navarro, once of Jane's Addiction, is already working with another group which includes the Peppers'

# Cautious op

**tim**